

THE REVEREND RICHARD BAXTER'S
LAST TREATISE

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AND EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. POWICKE, M.A., PH.D.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
THE LATE GEORGE UNWIN, M.A.

PROFESSOR OF ECONOMIC HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

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INTRODUCTION.

IT is now beginning to be fully realized that the main clues to the great social changes generally known as the Industrial Revolution must be sought in the social history of the century preceding those changes. The little tractate of Baxter's discovered by Dr. Powicke casts a most valuable new light on this period. Readers of Macaulay's brilliant third chapter will remember that the account of the condition of the working classes with which he concludes is based largely on the estimates of Gregory King and Sir Charles Davenant.¹ But though these may be regarded as the founders of the modern science of statistics, most of their figures are little more than shrewd guesswork, and some of them afford better evidence of the common assumptions of the directing classes than any objective social facts. This is especially true of those figures that embody an attempted classification of the working population, and these estimates furnish the best approach to the study of Baxter's appeal.

In Gregory King's "Scheme," adopted by Davenant, "of the income and expense of the several families of England, calculated for the year 1688" the broad conclusion is reached that there are 500,586 families "increasing the wealth of the kingdom" and 849,000 families "decreasing the wealth of the kingdom." The pessimism of this

¹ Davenant, "An Essay upon the Probable Methods of making a People Gainers in the Balance of Trade" (1699).

estimate casts into the shade all modern talk about the submerged tenth or even the more recent estimates based on the studies of Charles Booth and Seebohm Rowntree that twenty-five per cent. of the population are on the verge of starvation. The gloom is somewhat alleviated by the consideration that the families of those "decreasing the wealth" are estimated as consisting on the average of $3\frac{1}{4}$ persons each, whilst an average of $5\frac{1}{3}$ is assigned to the more fortunate families; but the poor still remain in the majority as will be seen from the rest of the estimate.

	Population.	Family Income.	Yearly Income per Head.	Yearly Expense per Head.	Increase per Head.
		£ s.	£ s.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Increasing wealth	2,675,520	68 18	12 18	11 15 4	1 2 8
Decreasing wealth	2,825,000	10 10	3 3	3 7 6	Decrease per Head. 4 6

What does this estimate mean and how was it arrived at? It was not based on any statistics of production, for none such existed. The decreasers of wealth include the whole body of labouring people and outservants, of cottagers and paupers, of common soldiers and sailors and vagrants. The earnings of all these who work are assumed to be below subsistence level, and yet at the same time to represent the total value of their production. As they are likewise supposed by hook or by crook to get a subsistence, the maintenance of themselves and their families involves a drain on the rest of the community. The estimate in fact rests upon what we may perhaps call a Deficit Value Theory of Labour which presents a striking contrast with Karl Marx's Surplus Value Theory and has about as much relation to the facts.

This great body of workers, who with their families constituted a majority of the population, though grouped together as "the Poor" and conceived of in the mass as unprofitable servants, was subdivided into two classes of nearly equal numbers but with widely different standards of life. The labouring people and outservants were estimated at 364,000 families with $3\frac{1}{2}$ members each and a yearly income of £15, whilst the cottagers and paupers were reckoned as 400,000 families of $3\frac{1}{4}$ members with an income of £6 10s. and an

expenditure of £7 6s. 3d., who were supposed to be in receipt of poor relief. Even with this limitation, the paupers would still have been nearly a quarter of the whole population, and Macaulay argues with some force that Gregory King's estimate of the evil was an exaggerated one, but adds that "it has certainly never been proved that pauperism was a less heavy burden . . . during the last quarter of the seventeenth century than it is in our own time."

Baxter's "Poor Husbandmen," however, do not belong to the paupers nor even to the decreasers of wealth in King's classification; and in order to see where King places them we must have before us the four classes immediately above those already enumerated in income and immediately below them in numbers.

	Heads per Family.	Persons.	Yearly Income per Family.		Yearly Income per Head.		Yearly Expense per Head.		Yearly Increase per Head.	
			£	s.	£	s.	£	s.	£	s.
Freeholders of the lesser sort	5½	660,000	55	0	10	0	9	10	0	10
Farmers	5	750,000	42	10	8	10	8	5	0	5
Shopkeepers and tradesmen	4½	225,000	45	0	10	0	9	0	1	0
Artisans and handicrafts .	4	240,000	38	0	9	10	9	0	0	10

It is amongst King's farmer class that we must seek for Baxter's poor husbandmen. According to King's estimate, the farmer class as a whole constituted more than an eighth of the population, and it is noteworthy that though he estimates their income as greater than that of the artisans he considers them as a less thriving class and reckons their savings as only half as much. This lends support to one of Baxter's main points which lies in an unfavourable comparison of the poor husbandman's position with that of the craftsman.

There is, however, one omission in King and Davenant's classification which can hardly fail to strike the student of economic history. Although England had long been famous for its manufacture (mainly of woollen cloth) there is no mention of a manufacturing class, either employing or employed. No doubt the most numerous body—the spinners—are included under the cottagers and labouring people, the weavers, combers, dyers, and shearmen, under artisans and handicrafts, and a good many independent clothiers of the Yorkshire type

under the lesser freeholders and farmers. But as these workers and masters, together with the clothiers and dealers who organized the manufacture and linked it with distant markets, were the representatives of a new economic order to which the older social order was adapting itself, the absence of any recognition of this dominant factor greatly diminishes the value of King's "Scheme" as an interpretation of English society. It is a static not a dynamic interpretation. Perhaps the like might be said of most statistics. But this enables us the better to appreciate the interpretative value of Baxter's keen social observation, sharpened as it was by intense sympathy. He clearly distinguishes his Poor Husbandmen, not merely from freeholders who have land of their own but also from the more prosperous tenant farmers who had profited by the new order, either by carrying on some kind of manufactures or by furnishing the food supplies of the capital and other growing centres of industry and trade. Of both the latter kinds he must have seen many on the way from London to Kidderminster, and he would probably have seen even more if his journey had been to Norwich, to York, to Manchester or to Exeter. When these deductions have been made the Poor Husbandmen of Baxter will appear as the less prosperous of two sections within Gregory King's class of Farmers, enjoying a smaller average income than the £42 10s. estimated for that class as a whole. So that the small master craftsman, if King's estimate of his income as £38, including savings of £2, were correct, may easily have been materially better off than the poor farmer, quite apart from the lesser proportion of physical and mental wear and tear, which in Baxter's opinion fell to his lot.

But there is a further comparison which, though it seems less justifiable at first sight, is yet significant and worth considering. "The case of their servants," says Baxter, "could they but continue so and contain themselves from marriage is far easier than that of the poor tenants that are their masters. For they know their works and wages and are troubled with no cares for paying rents and making good markets." The "Scheme" estimates the outservant's income at £15 and his average household as $3\frac{1}{2}$ persons. With a wife and $1\frac{1}{2}$ children to support it would not be surprising if, to use King's phraseology, he "decreased the wealth of the kingdom" by seven shillings a year. But the £15 was his own earnings, family or no family. It was the labourer's wage of a shilling a day, well authenti-

cated by the researches of Thorold Rogers. That an unmarried labourer with £15 a year might be not only more free from care and more able to save than a farmer with an income of £35 and a household of five is fairly arguable, but the real point of Baxter's comparison is that an enterprising labourer who was postponing marriage would have no inducement to become a tenant farmer in England but would apply his savings and his energies in some other direction.

If Baxter's account of the facts is confirmed by the economic historian, what of his account of the causes? Here too we may say, setting aside all question of social responsibility—a matter on which Baxter is more entitled to speak than ourselves—that his diagnosis is in full agreement with those of Thorold Rogers¹ and of later investigators. He attributes the depressed condition of the poor husbandmen to the fact that they were rack-rented, and the best authorities are agreed that rack-rents, or as economists would call them "economic rents," were beginning to be prevalent at this period. This implies (i) that freeholders and copyholders whose rent could not be raised and who therefore enjoyed the unearned increment were in occupation of an ever-dwindling proportion of the land under cultivation which was at this time being rapidly increased by enclosure; and (ii) that tenants were coming to pay the whole market value of their land in the form of a yearly rent on a short lease, instead of purchasing a long lease on a low rent by a considerable fine paid in advance. These changes were hastened by the large transfers of ownership that took place at the Dissolution of the Monasteries and in the Civil War and by the rapid and continuous shrinkage in the value of money from 1540 to 1660, which made it unprofitable for the owner to grant a long lease at a money rent. The average price of wheat, which had been six shillings a quarter before the Reformation, had risen to forty-eight shillings by the time of the Civil War, so that it is not surprising that the rent of ordinary arable land had in many cases risen from one shilling to six shillings per acre.

From the Restoration to the Revolution the price of wheat was in the main falling and in the four years before Baxter wrote his pamphlet the average was 28s. 2d. But rents, which had been raised along with prices though not to the full extent, would not readily fall with

¹ Rogers, "A History of Agriculture and Prices," v., 802, *et seq.*

them. The maintenance of economic rents was being made possible in spite of a fall in prices by improvements in agriculture and by a prosperous condition of industry, but the class least able to adapt itself to these conditions was that of the small tenant farmer, with little capital or resource, cultivating the common fields on the old methods, through whose land in North Oxfordshire, in South Warwick or South Worcestershire, Baxter must have passed on his way from Kidderminster to London. The poor husbandman ploughing the stubborn glebe more fit for pasture could neither bargain effectively with his landlord for a lower rent nor adapt his production to a better market, nor compete with the capital and the energy of the enclosing landlords and the enterprising farmers who were lending fertility to waste places. He was being left stranded on the margin of cultivation.¹ Baxter imagines a landlord expostulating with him "our lands are grown so cheap that we cannot get tenants for them. Some houses stand empty a year together; and some run away when they should pay their rent." To which he answers "This that you say is true and is like to be more so ere long. Now Ireland is to be as it were replanted, multitudes will go thither for better landlords and bargains as many do to Jamaica, New Jersey, Carolina, Maryland, Virginia, Barbadoes, Bermudas, New England."

Benjamin Franklin's account of his ancestry may afford us some light at this point. The family freehold of thirty acres in Northamptonshire, being considered insufficient for their maintenance, the eldest son combined his farming with the hereditary calling of a smith, and the younger sons were put out to other trades. Thomas, the eldest uncle of Benjamin, though bred a smith, being ingenious and encouraged in learning as all his brothers were by the squire, qualified for the bar and became a considerable man in the county. John, the next uncle, was bred a dyer of wool, and Benjamin, who was apprenticed to a silk dyer in London, invented a system of shorthand, made a collection of pamphlets and left behind two quarto MS. volumes of his own poetry. Josiah, the father of the more illustrious Benjamin, was also a dyer, but, having migrated to Boston in search of religious freedom, he set up there as a tallow chandler. He had seventeen children, thirteen of whom survived, and all his sons were apprenticed to trades.

¹ Gonner, "Common Land and Enclosure," 137-41, 161-86.

The sons of the poor tenant had not the same freedom of access as those of the freeholder to the skilled trades and professions. The Statute of Apprentices excluded them, not only from town handicrafts, but from their most natural resource, the calling of the country weaver. This restriction, however, had been largely ignored and was repealed in 1694, and perhaps the main outflow of labour from the land took this direction and produced the new proletariat of textile workers which is to be found in the suburbs of London, in the clothing districts of the West, and in South-East Lancashire in the first half of the eighteenth century. The social evils foretold by Baxter took the form not of a rising of peasants, but of riots of weavers and wool combers—the descendants of his “poor husbandmen.”

There is something sacred in the above : for it was Mr. Unwin's last bit of literary work, very generously done at my request.

PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

TWO months before his death on 8th December, 1691, when he was 76 and in the extremity of weakness, Baxter wrote a short treatise which he signed “18 October, 1691 *Moriturus G. Salvianus*.” It was, so far as we know, about the last thing that issued from his pen. Towards the end of it he mentions incidentally that he had been the author of 128 books. This was his farewell word ; and what at once arrests attention is its character and purpose. Theology, doctrinal controversy, questions of church-government, which had often engaged so much of his time and thought, are no longer in the foreground. It is near the truth, indeed, to say that these things had never held the first place in his mind, except momentarily. Religion held the first place—religion as an experience which set him right with God and man. Hence he could not possibly be indifferent to the moral demands of the Gospel. That faith in Christ entails absolute obedience to Christ became his motto. And more than anything else in the teaching of Christ, what seems to have moved him most deeply was its insistence on the “humane” side of conduct. This reinforced his own strong natural bent. For from boyhood, he was spontaneously merciful, generous and kind ; nor would it be possible to find a single example in his recorded words or

life of deliberate cruelty or hardness. Christ appealed to him, therefore, with special force as the friend of men—in particular of the unprivileged, the oppressed, the weak, the poor. When he was writing his “Saints Everlasting Rest” and had occasion to note the parable of Judgment in Matt. 25, the impression it made upon him was so startling and profound that he lived thenceforth under the spell of it. Again and again we meet with his citation of Christ’s words “Inasmuch as ye did it—or did it not—to one of the least of these my brethren ye did it, or did it not, to me.” In the spirit of these words he viewed all his possessions—spiritual, intellectual or material—as a trust for the benefit of those less favoured. Above all, he considered the poor, and gave to them habitually more than he reserved for himself. His notions on this matter were mediæval rather than modern. He was influenced merely by the fact, and the obvious effects, of poverty. Wise counsels, and wise measures based upon them, which are now the rule, had not yet been thought of. The poor were Christ’s brethren—that was enough. To relieve them, in proportion to his means and their necessity, was Christ’s will. That closed the matter. On the other hand, he could not but regard it, for the same reason, as a damning sin to neglect, despise, defraud and oppress the Poor. We have here the sufficient explanation of the extraordinary vehemence with which he spoke to the wealthy classes of England. Though far from being a leveller, or even a democrat, he realized, as few did, the claims and rights of the common man; the temptations of the wealthy to ignore these; and the penalties—individual and social—of so doing. An address “to the nobles, gentlemen and all the rich, directing them how they may be richer” which he wrote as Preface for one of his earlier books¹ (1658) may be mentioned as an illustration. One might commend it for several passages of surpassing eloquence; but more wonderful is its moral fervour, the fervour of a prophet who fears not the face of man, in pleading for the poor and needy against the oppressive vices of their unjust and selfish superiors. It would be difficult to find in the English language a bolder indictment—severe, impartial, and unsparing—yet qualified by a prevalent desire to be just and convincing.

¹ “The Crucifying of the World by the Cross of Christ,” enlarged from an assize Sermon at Worcester, and preached at the request of his friend Thomas Foley Esq., High Sheriff.

And it is the chief interest of the following treatise that it reveals the old man of 76 as cherishing the same fire in his heart as the man of 43. The added years, with all they brought to him of such sufferings as are apt to narrow the mind and embitter the soul, had left him no less truly sensitive—perhaps more so—to the cry of the poor. But there is a significant difference. It is not the poor in general of whom he now thinks. It is the sort of poor among whom he was born and bred—the poor husbandman of places like Eaton Constantine and Rowton and High Ercall and Wroxeter whose hard lives he had witnessed. He is living in London. Its streets are around him and its noises are in his ears ; but in memory he is back again among the scenes of his youth. No doubt he has heard of what the Poor Husbandman is made to endure elsewhere—in every part of the land, but what gives point and poignancy to all this comes from those pictures of the poor man's lot and life which he had seen. He had seen, and understood, and sympathised. The sense of its sordid misery, over against the flaunting luxury of those most responsible for it, leaps up into a flame within him. He must speak to Dives for Lazarus one last word. Every other interest compared with this dies away. Religion is nothing unless it inspires justice and kindness. He must say this once for all ; and say it to those who are in constant danger of forgetting it. So, with trembling hand he takes up his pen and writes. He writes, as was his habit, straight on—not stopping to polish his sentences, nor to correct little mistakes ; careless of spelling, or style, or repetition—eager only to get the task done ere the lamp of his fading life goes out. It is a pathetic document in some respects. For, evidence of the trembling hand and also alas ! of the waning vigour of mind is traceable on nearly every page. But a kindly reader passes by any sign of weakness ; and only remarks how the old man maintains to the end all his spiritual glow, his moral passion, his clear vision of the fact that social righteousness is as essential an implicate of the Gospel as personal salvation.

2. Attached to the autograph of the treatise and bound up with it is a fair copy made by an unknown hand. Probably it was made with a view to publication ; and it is certain (from his “ A Request to the Subscribed Readers ”) that publication was what Baxter desired and expected. One wonders, therefore, why the MS. has never seen the light till to-day. It must have been known to Matthew Sylvester

the curator of all the Baxter MSS. and the laborious editor of the "*Reliquiae Baxterianae*." Very likely, too, it was known to Dr. Daniel Williams who collaborated with Sylvester in preparing for the press another of Baxter's posthumous treatises, "*The Protestant Religion truly stated*" (1692); and also to Baxter's assistant and intimate friend, Joseph Read, who edited the treatise (1694) on "*Universal Redemption*" which had been left to him in MS. Why then did they, contrary to his intention, leave this latest of his writings in the dark? The explanation is not clear; but, for myself, I should find it in the feeling of his friends that its sentiments were too radical and the author's expression of them here and there too frank or fierce. On more than one former occasion, Baxter had brought trouble on himself by the blunt assertion of unpopular views, political and social as well as religious. A memorable example was his "*Holy Commonwealth*" (1659) which, in effect, challenged every extant theory or practice of government; and rendered him so obnoxious to almost every party in the State that, at last, for the sake of peace—though retracting no important point—he revoked the book. So in the case of his "*Breviate of the Life of Margaret Charlton*," we have his own word for it, that the first draft of this Life of his wife displayed such frankness, with regard to the steps which led up to his marriage, as to shock the timorous prudence of the friends who had a sight of it, and urge them to advise (alas! successfully) a drastic pruning. Timorous prudence never weighed much with Baxter. What he thought he said; and said, usually, in the plainest words. It will be seen that he does the same in this Treatise. Thus, e.g., he is not in the least afraid to tell Landlords who object to his "*Plea*" on the ground that the "*maine weight*" of taxation "*lyeth*" on them, that such an arrangement is perfectly just. "*Who should pay money but those that have it?*" (c. vi., obj. 9). There is much else in a like strain and one may well suppose that it would frighten the cautious guardians of his reputation.

3. Interspersed with the general theme Baxter lets drop (*suo modo*) a number of welcome items about himself. We knew, e.g., that he was constrained by the poor's necessity "*to play the physician*" at Kidderminster; but here he tells us how long he did so—"about 6 or 7 yeares" (c. i., § 11) and lets us see what medicines he prescribed (c. iv., § 3). He had been forced to give up flesh-meat by the nature of his infirmities; but here he tells how he gave it up gladly,

how it had always gone against his feeling "to take away the lives of our fellow-creatures" for human good, and how he had become convinced that a vegetarian diet is best (c. iv., § 3). Further, he clears up the question to what extent he himself had been an owner of land or houses; and what had been his experience in that capacity. "Five tenements of freehold" as his "patrimony," and one purchased house were all he could boast, and his net income from them had been never a penny (c. vi., obj. 11).

4. These personal details arise out of his treatment of the main theme—which is, the condition in England of "The Poor Husbandman," by whom is meant not small landowners of the yeoman class, nor tenants of large holdings, nor even tenants of small holdings if they live near London, or have a trade at command besides their farm; but only the rack-rented man wholly dependent on the produce of his few acres and obliged to pay whatever his landlord may demand, or else go. "In all countreyes" (counties) "the small livings are the farre greatest number" (c. i., § 1). Their rents range from £80 to £5; and it is the smallest that entail the hardest lot. "It's well if all" the tenants' "care and toil will serve to pay their rent" (c. i., § 2). Yet "the Labor of these men is great and circular or endlesse. In so much that their bodyes are allmost in constant wearyness and their minds in constant care or trouble" (c. i., § 3). Hence they have no leisure or desire for reading. Many of them cannot read, or have no money to spare for the purchase of books, even a Bible. So, they "cannot have their children taught to reade;" and, consequently, these, with themselves, are in danger of lapsing into barbarism. Baxter dwells much on this aspect of the case. "Ignorance is the soile of all errors and wickednes; and knowledge, by necessary helpes, is the parent of all piety and virtue" (c. ii., § 7). But ignorance, with its resulting degradation, is only a part of the evil which besets the Poor husbandman. No less cruel and crushing is the virtual slavery of his relation to the landlord (c. i., § 9). "None are so servilely dependent." Then, too, how sad is his case, "when husband, wife or children fall sick, they have no money to pay a physician or an apothecary." "I have known frugall freeholders of £20 and £30 a year that had much adoe to pay for physick the summe of 10s. to save their lives" (c. i., § 11). Further, let the significance of such facts be realized. "Think not this a matter of

small importance, as if it were but relieving a Lazarus at your doores . . . It is of publike consequence and of spirituall and everlasting concernment" (c. ii). For the husbandmen in question form the greater part of the nation, they are "those that the nation can least spare ; it is them that all live by." "What would London be without the Husbandman, but many hundred thousand famished corpses ?" All who work in cities are bound up with him and flourish or decay as he does.

Public honour and safety, also, are bound up with him. If he be mentally a slave and a fool where is the honour of being his King or Lord or Master ? And, since it is from husbandmen that most of the soldiers are drawn, is not the nation's safety hazarded by their debasement ? "The militia of a well-constituted Kingdome should consist of men of known interest that have something of their owne to defend and not of mere mercenary slaves that, having nothing to value but their lives, will shift for their lives by flight or treachery" (c. ii., § 6). Moreover, it is the Landlord himself who must eventually suffer most by his own injustice. Landlords complain that they cannot get or keep their Tenants. Men wont take up the land, or run away when the rent is due. That is so (says Baxter) ; but the blame is yours : "If you would abate their rents so farre [he has urged an abatement of one-third (c. iv., § 2)] as they might live comfortably like men and like Englishmen and Christians they would neither turne up your tenements nor run away or quitt the land" (c. vi., 11). Thus, for selfish reasons alone, landlords would do well to amend their ways. But not chiefly on this ground does Baxter make his appeal. He makes it rather on the twofold ground of what is required from a lover of the commonwealth, and his fellowmen. "Gentlemen (mistake me not) the summe of my request to you is but this, that you will regard the publike welfare of the nation above any few particular cases, and the interest of Christian Religion and the soules of men above all youre worldly interest of fleshly pleasure" (c. iv., § 1).

5. But he wrote with his eyes open. Although the men addressed were nominally Christian and strong adherents of the Church, he did not expect to overcome the self-indulgence practised by the wealthy landlords as a class. "Lust needeth so much that all that they can extort is little enough to feed it" (c. iii. § 4).

6. So, on the assumption that the landlords as a body will not be persuaded by his plea—"yea that there is little hope that they will so much as read it"—he directs the "poor unrelieved husbandmen" how to regard their painful lot, and make the best of it, and turn it to the highest account (c. vii.).

Baxter MSS. (Treatises) Vol. iii., ff. 154-171 }
(copy) ff. 172-194 }

THE POOR HUSBANDMAN'S ADVOCATE

TO

RICH RACKING LANDLORDS

Written in compassion especially of their *sowls* and of the *land*
by GILDAS¹ SALVIANUS.²

To the Lords Knights and Gentlemen of England, the Legacy of
a Dying lover of Soules and of Charity, who would fain
persuade them not to come to Divese's place of torment: and
to believe Christ who assureth them that by what they faith-
fully give to the poore they give incomparably more to
themselves, as giving it to him that will reward them.

A Request to the subdescribed Readers.

It is a great edifice that is to be built and therefore requireth many
hands: Lords, Knights and other Rich country Landlords must be

¹ Gildas *Badonicus*, sive sapiens, Britannus Monachus (fl. c. 516-573) ("Bibliotheca Historica Medii Aevi," von August Potthast, Berlin, 1896). Archbishop Usher (Primord, pp. 412, 444, 906. Edit., Dublin, 1639), distinguished him from Gildas *Albanus* (425-512) and put the birth of *Badonicus* in 520 (assumed date of the siege of Kair Badon, i.e. Bath). Baxter may have read Usher's book and agreed with him; but this wouldn't affect his estimate of the prophetic character ascribed to Gildas, on the strength of his history entitled "De Excidio et conquestu Britanniae ac flebili Castigatione in Reges, Principes et Sacerdotes." The second part is "a lengthened series" of invectives against Kings, Priests and People—especially Priests. On this account it was called the "querulous book." The edition (1568) of John Jorseline, chaplain to Archbishop Parker—which Baxter very likely used—has for frontispiece a scourge held down by a hand, and, about it, the words "whoso knoweth the Lord's will and doth it not shall be beaten with many stripes."

² Salvianus (c. 400-480) Presbyter of Marseilles, "the very type of a monk and a scholar" (in the eyes of his contemporaries) would appeal to Baxter by his treatise, entitled "De gubernatione Dei" which aimed to show

the Master builders. I have here prepared some materials but we want carrying Labourers to reach them up. I am too low and feeble to climb high. Without such Conveyance all is lost. As for the wise Godly temperate Gentlemen, I hope they have not much need of such exhortations : they are taught of God to love their poore Brethren, and to feed, cloath and relieve Christ in the least of his servants, whom he disdaineth not to call his Brethren (and the greatest Lord should not disdain it). But those that most need it I have no access to : and if they chance to see this little book they will not read it : they have

how the degeneracy of the Romans had brought upon Church and State alike God's judgment in the shape of the Northern barbarians, and that worse will follow unless they repent.

Baxter's appropriation to himself of the two-fold name, *Gildas Salvianus*, was not a sign of presumption but of his conviction that, face to face with similar conditions, he was called to deliver a similar call to Repentance.

The seriousness with which he took up this rôle is the remarkable thing. *Gildas Salvianus* is the first, and leading, title of his "Reformed Pastor" (1655) addressed to the clergy.

But I have found a MS. in Dr. Williams's Library,* with the inscription "Repent O England : the *third* part of *Gildas Salvianus*," or, a sermon of repentance prepared to have been preached at the Merchants Lecture on the 2nd of September, 1679, being the anniversary Fast in remembrance of the burning of London and since enlarged by Richard Baxter." The dedicatory epistle (dated 15 Sept.) is to those Merchants and others who have encouraged us in preaching the Lecture at Pinner's Hall, and on p. 2 is a list, under seven heads, of those sins which the Merchants and others are to search out and repent of. Most interesting, however, is a sort of prospectus to the effect that "*Gildas Salvianus*," means to address himself to all "the several parties in England and to call them all, including himself, to Repentance for their particular notorious sins." The scheme was to have four Parts. Part one was the "Reformed Pastor"; part ii. was the Sermon of Repentance which he preached to the House of Commons at a fast the day before the recalling home of the King (30 April, 1660); part iii. was the unpublished sermon to the merchants (just mentioned); Part iv. was to comprehend all sections of the Church; the Cities or Corporations; the surviving Members of that Parliament, which made the Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, the Conventicle Act, etc.; the Nobles, Justices, Lawyers, Gentry, and rich men of the Land; and, lastly, the King—to whom, however, he would venture to speak "no words of reproof but a few of humble and necessary petition." It was to this fourth part (a summary of the rest) that he intended to prefix the words "*Repent O England*, John Bradford's farewell at the Stake." The scheme was never worked out; and the fourth part reduced itself to this plea with the "Rich racking landlords" for the "Poor Husbandman."

* B. MSS. (Treatises), iv. ff. 281-315.

other work to spend the day in ; at their tables with Dives his five Brethren, and at the Tavern and the Play House and the Gaming House and such like : the very Title of it will provoke them to cast it by with scorn. But I hope there is not a Lord, Knight, or Esq. in England, that hath not some men of Conscience and Clemency that have access to them, and some freedom with them, and interest in them ; it is such that I intreate for the sake of the Kingdom, and of their poor neighbours, and these Rich men's Souls, to put this book, or such another, into these Landlords hands, and to intreate them seriously to read it : especially the Parish Ministers whose case doth doubly oblige them to take care of the Poor. Those Ministers that have not sufficient to relieve the poor themselves, may thus helpe them by the hands of those that can. And pious servants that dwell with such men may find some opportunity to offer them such a book. But sure no Lord or Knight that is of the Church of England can be offended with his Pastor or Chaplaine for such charitable motions. If they reject this for the Author or title Sake, get them to read the *Spittle*¹ sermons (I would they were printed in one volume), especially the excellent Sermons of the excellent Dr. Isaac Barrow² for Love and Compassion to the Poor.

Octob. 18. 1691. Moriturus G. Salvianus.

The Contents.

- Chap. 1. The matter of fact described.
- Chap. 2. The great Importance of the Case.
- Chap. 3. The Causes of this Common Evill.
- Chap. 4. The Remedies humbly offered to Landlords.
- Chap. 5. A multitude of plain pertinent Texts of Scripture cited to move those that believe in Christ.
- Chap. 6. The objections against it fully answered.
- Chap. 7. Advice to poor Tenants that can get no relief from Man.

To avoid prolixity I omit the consenting Testimonies of the generality of the sober Heathens and Mahometans ; and the great Care that the Grecian and Roman Laws took for the ingenuous

¹ Spittall or Spital Sermons.

² Isaac Barrow [1614-1680]. The reference is to Barrow's "Spital" Sermon "on the Duty and Reward of Bounty to the Poor," Easter (1671) "which is said to have occupied 3½ hours in delivery, though it was not preached in full." It fills 30 pp. of the 17th Edition (large folio) of his works.

education and usage of the vulgar. Yea, that which I say for Charity to the poore hath, by the light and Law of nature, the acknowledgment of all ages and nations that have anything of humanity though the tyrannical and most wicked obey not what they confesse to be their duty.

The Summe is a Request.

That the poore Husbandmen may not be so toyled like beasts, endangered for want of necessary warmth, and distracted with cares to pay their rents, as to disable them to mind their soul-concernes and to read God's word and worship him in their families and to educate their children in civility and piety; and that thereby the land degenerate not into Atheisine, Infidelity and Barbarisme.

The oppression of the poore Husbandmen in Germany by the Rich, made them hearken to Muncer¹ and other seducers that bid them endure their slavery no longer: if oppression makes a wise man mad, no wonder if it do so by the ignorant vulgar: so great was the number of the risers that the number of the slaine is said to be an hundred thousand. Among others Conrad Lycosthenes² thus describeth it. De prodig: page 532:

“Anno 1525 in Augusto sol per aliquot dies ut igneus globus in Coelo comparuit: Hoc ipso anno in Germania horribiles et ante nunquam auditi motus a servis Rusticis in Alsatia, Suevia, Francia, Thuringia et in illis terris quae ad Rhenum scitae sunt, excitabantur. Motus hi magna vi et armis Principum sunt repressi, adeo ut, intra menses fere tres, supra centena millia Rusticorum conciderint in conflictu, non aliter atq. pecora trucidati.”

Should the Romane powers here againe prevaile, the restoring of Monasteries and Church Lands may take downe the tumor of the Belly of this land in a lesse desirable manner than by a Jewish Jubilee or a Romane *Lex Agraria* and may [make] many wish, as the fire of London did, that they had given more to promote their

¹ Muncer = Thomas Munzer (c. 1489-1525) had great influence over the common people. He professed to work out Luther's principles in a sort of communistic theocracy which he actually set up at Mühlhausen where he was captured and executed by Philip of Hesse in May, 1525.

² (1518-1561.) The work intended bore the title “Prodigiorum ac ostentorum chronicon, quae praeter naturae ordinem . . . ab exordio mundi . . . ad haec . . . tempora, acciderunt, &c.” 1557 fol.

future reward, rather than to stand amazed in terror while all is taken from them against their wills, as the reward of their iniquity.

The Husbandman's and the Nation's Advocate and Petition to
Racking Landlords.

Gentlemen,

Though these lines must expect to meet with much prejudice, I beseech you let them not be rejected with so much contempt as to be denied your perusal and sober consideration. They are short and you find time for work of less importance. Because they that live in ease and fulness do seldome truly know the case of the laborious and poore, I will first describe the *matter of fact* and tell you truly the poore husbandman's case, and consequently, the case of England, and then I will tell you the *importance of this case*, and next the *causes* of it, and lastly *the cure* so far as it is curable.

Chap. 1.

The matter of fact described.

§ 1. The Body of this Kingdom consisteth of Land-Proprietors, of Hand-Labourers, of Tradesmen and Merchants, and of the Literate Professions of divers sorts. The Land-proprietors are such as use their land by *themselves* and *servants*, or by *Tenants*. These Tenants are they whose case I am now to open and plead. The Husbandmen are the *Stamen*¹ of the Commonwealth. All the rest do live by them. It is the fruits of the earth and of their labours (with a little addition of fishing) that maintaineth all. And yet whose case is so hard as theirs? Gentlemen say, Oure Land is our owne and therefore we may make the best of it for our owne commodity, and he that will give most for it shall be our Tenant.

§ 2. The old custome was to let lands by Lease for Lives or for a long term of years, and to take a fine at first and a small yearly rent afterward, and so, when a man, with his marriage portion, had taken a Lease he lived comfortably afterward and got somewhat for his children. But now in most countrys (counties) the custom is changed into yearly rack-rents :² or, if a man takes a Lease for many years it is

¹ "The warp in the upright loom of the ancients." "As in a web, the Stamen or Warp is fast fixed, through which the woof is cast or woven," Fuller's *Pisgah*, 1650 (Oxford Dictionary).

² A rent equal or nearly equal to the value of the land.

yearly to pay as much as the tenement is worth and that is as much as any man will give for it, and in all counties the small Livings are the farre greatest number : where there is one of 80£ or 70£ or 60£, yea or 50£ value, there are many of 30£ or 20£ or 10£ or 5£. And what will one of 10£ or 20£ do towards the charge of stocking and manuring it, and the maintaining of himselfe, wife, and children with food and cloathing, and paying them for their labour : And how hard will it be after all this, to pay for it 20£ rent ? And Greater Livings must have a greater stock and more servants and labourers to manage them. But usually such have the better advantage, having much to sell besides what maintaineth them. But few have so good a bargaine as to lay up anything considerable for their children. Its well if all their care and toil will serve to pay their rent.

§ 3. The Labor of these men is great, and circular or endless : insomuch that their bodyes are allmost in constant wearyness and their minds in constant care or trouble. Yet for all this I pittie not their bodyes much because their Labour is usually recompensed with health. Nor do I much pittie them for their coarse fare, so they have but fire and cloathing to keepe them warme, and food that is not an enemy to health. For by the advantage of their labour and health, their browne bread and milk and butter and cheese and cabbages and turnips and parsnips and carrots and onions and potatoes and whey and buttermilk and pease pies and apple pies and puddings and pancakes and gruel and flummery¹ and furmety,² yea dry bread, and small drinke, do afford their appetites a pleasanter relish and their bodyes more strength and longer life than all the varieties and fullnes of flesh and wines and strong drinckes do, to the idle gluttonous and voluptuous rich men : and usually now it is the Diveses that lie ulcerated by sores and tormented with the Gowt, and the tongues of their flatterers cannot lick them into ease. The worst of the poore mans case as to health, is that they are put to goe through raine and wett, through thick and thin, through heat and cold and oft want that which nature needeth.

§ 4. But alas it is a greater cause of pittie that they usually want those helpe for knowledge and a godly and Heavenly life, and com-

¹ Flummery (Welsh) = a kind of food made by coagulation of wheat flour and oatmeal (Oxford Dictionary).

² Furmety = frummety, a dish made of hulled wheat, boiled in milk and seasoned with sugar, spice, etc. (Wright's English Dialect Dictionary).

fortable preparation for, and prospect of, death that others more ordinarily enjoy.

1°. They are usually so poore that they cannot have time to read a chapter in the bible or to pray in their families. They come in weary from their labours, so that they are fitter to sleep than to read or pray : and their servants are so heavy with early rising and hard working that they cannot attend to what they heare. The soule is here so tyed to the body that it hath constant need of its right temperament for its due operation : a heavy body tired with labour is like a tired horse to a traveller, or a Lute out of tune to a musician, or a knife or toole to cut or worke with that wants an edge. The aged, weak, and sick do feel what a weary body is ; how unfit for any religious exercise save complaining and begging mercy of God. I cannot but pitty such when they sleep at sermon or at prayer, and say as Christ to his sleepy disciples *The Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak*.

2°. Yea, abundance, bred up in toil and poverty, cannot read, nor cannot have their children taught to reade. Such an education is as effectuall as a Popish Canon, to keep the vulgar from reading the holy Scriptures. Alas what is a Bible to such any more than bare paper (unlesse they heare another read it). What a dolefull case is most of the Christian world in, for want of this ! In America, Georgia, Abassia, Greece, Moscovie, Poland, Lithuania, Livonia, Croatia, Sclavonia, Bosnia, Russia, Servia, Hungary, yea, among the poore peasants or tenants in Spain, Portugal, France, etc., how few can read ? yea, in Denmark and much of the Swedes Dominions ? What nation is so happy in this as England ? And yet till one poore Nonconformist ejected Minister, *Thomas Gouge*,¹ got fourscore reading schools there set up, how many thousands were there in Wales that could not read ! Yea, how many thousand such yet are there ; not only there but throughout the greatest part of this land.

¹ 1609-1681, "the silenced Minster of Sepulchres Parish—who made works of charity a great part of the business of his life," *R.B.*, iii., 17, 18, 148 (for characterisation of him) 190 (activity in and for Wales). In his "Christian Directory" (1673), Baxter prints a long letter which he had written to Gouge answering his two questions, "Should one devote or set by a certain part of daily income, and what proportion is a man bound to give to the poor ?"—Pt. iv., cap. 30

No nation on earth is so blessed with Learning and plenty of excellent books of all sorts ; but what are they to them that cannot read ? Printing hath been a blessed means of increasing knowledge and religion in the world ; but what is it to these poore men and women ? Ministers study to write in the most instructing and edifying manner, and to these poore people it is of no use—no more than preaching to the deafe, or in a tongue not understood.

3°. And those that can read are so poore that they cannot spare money to buy a Bible nor a smaller book.

4°. And reading much is of so great advantage for knowledge that, without it, the poore people are the lesse capable of profitting at the Church by hearing. How little successe have ministers usually with such, by their publike reading or preaching ! And how can the Pastor teach all these to understand the catechisme and learne it ? The eye taketh in sentiments more effectually than the ears : especially when men can ofter Read than Heare, and can choose a subject and booke that is most suitable to them, and can there review what they had forgotten. They cannot so often heare againe and recall the same sermon which they had heard in publike.

5°. And when poverty and custome have trained up the people in so unhappy a way, they usually grow into a contempt, and thence into a malignant scorne and hatred, of that which [they] want¹ : like the Turkes that banish learning as an enemy to the publike state, that taketh men off from their labour and trades and warfare and service to their great masters. And hence it is that this ignorant rabble are everywhere the greatest enemies against Godly ministers and people. And if they can but get a Literate malignant (Prelate or Priest) out of faction and enmity to encourage them, they will be ready for any mischievous designs. If any would raise an Army to extirpate knowledge and religion, the Tinkers and Sowgawters² and crate-carriers and beggars and bargemen and all the rabble that cannot reade, nor ever use, the bible, will be the forwardest to come in to such a militia. And they will joyne with those that cry up the Church, if it may but tend to pull downe the Church and all serious Church-worke and interest. If Papists or forreine enemies or Rebels would raise insurrections, these are fitt to serve them, if they get but

¹ I.e. lack.

² Swineherds? Not in any general or local dictionary that I know of.

advantage by some great Landlords and hypocrite malicious clergymen to seduce them. And poverty, causing ignorance, turneth men to barbarians like the wild Americans and then into brutes and then into devils ; unlesse where the publike power prevaileth against them, or God's grace doth notably take hold on here and there one among them. Whereas reading and praying and meditating tendeth to knowledge in the necessary effects of knowledge, and teach men to live if not as Saints yet as Civil men and *emollit mores nec sinit esse feros*. If wisdome had not been necessary Solomon had not so magnified it, nor a Saviour bin sent from heaven to teach it, nor a Scripture and ministry ordered to propagate it.

§ 5. The case of their servants, could they but continue so and containe themselves from marriage, is farre easier than of the poor Tenants that are their masters. For they know their worke and wages, and are troubled with no cares for paying Rents, or making good markets, or for the losse of corn or cattle, the rotting of sheepe or the unfavourable weather, nor for providing for wife and children and paying labourers' and servants' wages.

§ 6. But the condition of their Landlords household servants is as farre above these poore Tenants as a Gentleman is above a day labourer. They live in fullness to the satisfying of the flesh and comparatively in idleness. They feed on the variety of flesh and fish that cometh from their masters tables, when the poore tenants are glad of a piece of hanged bacon once a week, and some few that can kill a Bull eate now and then a bit of hangd biefe, enough to trie the stomack of an ostrige.¹ He is a rich man that can afford to eat a joint of fresh meate (biefte, mutton or veale) once in a month or fortnight. If their sow pigge or their hens breed chickens, they cannot afford to eate them, but must sell them to make their rent. They cannot afford to eate the egges that their hens lay, nor the apples or peares that grow on their trees (save some that are not vendible) but must make money of all. All the best of their butter and cheese they must sell, and feed themselves and children and servants with skimd cheese and skimd milke and whey curds. And through God's mercy all this doth them no harme. But how great is the difference betweene their dyet and labour and case and that of the poorest

¹ I.e. Ostrich.

household servants of Lords, Knights and Gentlemen : the poore tenant taketh every foot boy or groome or porter of his Landlord to be a gentleman whose favour seemeth a preferment to him : but if a Butler, or a Chamberlain, or a Clerke or Steward do but smile on him he thinks he is blest.

§ 7. It is much easier with the handicrafts labourer that hath a good trade. A Joyner or a Turner can worke in the dry howse, with tolerable or pleasant work, and knoweth his price and wages. A Weaver or a Shoemaker or a Taylor can worke without the wetting or tiring of his body, and can thinke and talke of the concerns of his soule without impediment to his labour. I have known many¹ that weave in the Long Loom that can set their sermon-notes or a good book before them and read and discourse together for mutual edification while they worke. But so the poore husbandman can seldom do. And though the labour of a Smyth be hard, it is in a dry howse and but by short fittes : and little, in comparison of Threshing and Reaping, but as nothing in comparison of mowing, which constantly puls forth a mans whole strength. And though a poore carryer hath a toilsome life, going through all weathers and all roads, yet he knoweth his work and wages, and is free from abundance of the husbandmans losses and cares. The same I may say of others that work in iron : The nailors and spurriers and sithsmiths² and swordmakers and all the rest about Dudley and Stourbridge and Brumicham³ and Walsall and Wedgbury³ and Wolverhampton and all that country. They live in poverty, but not in the husbandmans case. They know their work and pay ; and have but little further care. The same I may say of fishermen at sea. [Their] Labour is tolerable and knoweth its time and bounds, and their care is but to catch their fish and sell it. As to seamen and soldiers, if they be such as only make a trade of serving the covetousness of merchants, or of killing men for their military gaine or honor or a licentious tyrannical life, rather than for the good or safety of the Commonwealth, I shall not bring them into comparison, but acknowledge them more miserable than the Husbandman and than a Highway robber is than any honest labourer, or the wolfe than the sheepe that shall not scape the pastors revenge, though he teare the lambs.

¹ At Kidderminster.

² I.e. scythesmiths.

³ Birmingham, Wednesbury.

§ 8. And uppon all this it is observable that though we are most beholden to Husbandry for the maintenance of Prince and people, Rich and poore, and all the lande, yet few are so hardly used as the Husbandmen. And, which I speake with grieve, except here and there one (of the richer sort mostly that are not pincht with the necessity of others) there is far more ignorance of religion among them than among tradesmen and corporation inhabitants and poore men of manuell artifices. And yet they are not usually guilty of the sins of Gluttony, fornication or adultery, idlenes, sloth; nor usually of drunkenness, so much as rich citizens, and great mens' full and idle serving men: for *sine cerere et Baccho friget Venus*. But among merchants, mercers, drapers and other corporation-tradesmen, and among weavers, taylors, and such like labourers, yea among poore naylor, and such like, there is usually found more knowledge and religion than among the poore enslaved husbandmen.

§ 9. I may well say *enslaved*: for none are so servilely dependent (save household servants and ambitious expectantes) as they are on their Landlords. They dare not displease them lest they turn them out of their howses; or increase their rents. I believe that their Great Landlords have more command of them than the King hath. If a Landlord be but malignant, an enemy to piety or sobriety or peace, his enslaved tenants are at his beck to serve him, in matters of any publike consequence. And of old time it was worse than it is now: when every Earle or Baron or Bishop could do much towards raising of an Army, and all their dependents would follow them. And in Scotland it was worse, and in Ireland, and in other lands where the Lorde could raise warre against their King uppon discontents, till kings were faine to take them downe, as they now are. And all this cometh from the enslaving of Husbandmen.

§ 10. In all this the Reader must know that I speak not the case of all Husbandmen, but of the Racked poore. I doubt not but some that live about London, or that know not the common case, will say that I misreport it, and it is not so bad, and that Husbandmen live as plentifully and contentedly as others. But 1° I speake not of freeholders that pay no rent; 2° I speake not of the richer sort (who are few) that have lands of their owne, besides their farmes: there are neere London some husbandmen that have per annum 200£, 300£, 400£, yea 500£ lands of their owne, that in remote parts would

passee for gentlemen of great rank ; 3° nor do I speake of Middlesex and the parts neere it, especially neere London : for though they pay double for their grounds, they have treble opportunity to improve them and to make their rents so. They have all the dung of the city, cow dung, horse dung, and cold ashes for the carriage ; and when their horse teemes bring hay or other vendibles to London to be sold, it is small trouble to carry back a load of dung, which they do at ten or twelve miles distance at least. And there they make a great dung hill, of one row of the superficies of the greene earth, and another row of weedes, and another of lime, and so againe and againe, till it be neere two yards high ; and this they leave many months to rott, and then carry it to their ground. And they come neere 20 miles for waggon-loads of old rotten rags, which some make great gaine by selling, hireing abundance of poore people to rake them out of dunghills. And though they give a great price for them, it so much furthereth their grasse and corne as fully recompenseth their cost and labour. And, above all, London is a market which will take up all that they bring, so that nothing vendible need to stick on their hands ; and, by garden stuffs and by pease and beans and turnips, they can make more gaine of their grounds than poore country tenants can do of ten times the same quantity. And they that live but 30 or 40 miles off, that have rich pasture grounds will never want a market at London for their lambes and fat sheepe, and their fat cattle, and pigs and geese and whatever they can spare : when even the countreyes an hundred miles off think it worth the great cost of sending droves of swine and cattle in the London markets ; yea, even from Ireland by sea and land. And Gloucestershire, Suffolke, Warwickshire, etc., send their charge to this all devouring markt. And I suppose those that live neere other great cityes, as Yorke, Norwich, Bristoll, etc. have some good degree of the same advantage. 4° Nor do I speake of those Tenants that have some small Tenement of 5£ or 10£ per annum, and have besides a trade which doth maintaine them. A Weaver, a Butcher, a Tailor, a Joyner, a Carpenter may afford to pay his Landlords rent, which another cannot that hath nothing but the ground to live uppon. These exceptions premised, it is the ordinary case of Rackt poore tenants that have no other trade to live on, that I am speaking of.

§ 11. And they will not allwaies live in health ; and when

husband, wife or children fall sick, they have no money to pay a Physician or an Apothecary. If a posset, or some molossus¹ called Treacle or a little Ginger or a little aqua vitae will not do it, it must be undone; when a Physician's fees, or the Apothecary's drugs would come to one or two pounds, the poore people have not a shilling to give. Little do the rich and Lawyers and Physicians thinke how precious a shilling is with the poore. I have known frugall freeholders of 20£ or 30£ a yeare that had much adoe to pay for physick the summe of ten shillings to save their lives in cases o danger. I was by the poore's necessity constrained to play the Physician about 6 or 7 yeares, though I never took a farthing; and I have had a good woman, in great thankfullness, offer me a groat, and bid me *please myselfe* (out of her groat)! Many a thousand lye sick and die that have not money for physicians (nor necessary helpes); and if they left all to nature, perhaps with one halfe, it would be no losse. But then in feare they run to every self-conceited Shee-physician who will, with confident ignorance, soone dispatch them.

Chap. 2. The great Importance of the Case :

Think not this a matter of small importance, as if it were but relieving a Lazarus at your doores (though Christ counteth not that small that will reward a cup of water). It is of publike consequence and of spirituall and everlasting concernment.

§ 1. It is not the case of a few but of a great part of the land (tho the full² that know it not will not believe it).

§ 2. It is the case of those that the nation can least spare: it is them that all live by. You should not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corne; the husbandman that labours must partake of the fruites, saith the Holy Ghost by Paul. Ministers thence argue for their maintenance by tythes and contribution: and how few of them labour harder than the husbandman that payeth them. What would London be without the Husbandman, but many hundred thousand famished corpses! And what would the Courts of Princes be! And

¹ Variant form of molasses = "the uncrystallized syrup drained from sand sugar; also, the syrup obtained from sugar in the process of refining." "Good store of Molossus or common Treacle to sweeten it"—Oxford Dictionary.

² The full, i.e. those with plenty.

whence would the tables of the rich be furnished with variety of dishes, and Dives fare sumptuously every day ! Where would our Navyes be victualled and our Armys maintained but for the Husbandman !

§ 3. The impoverishing of them is the impoverishing of all the rest of the land. Artificers that worke for them cannot be paid ; Merchants and allmost all the London tradesmen will be impoverished because the country cannot take off their commodities. Were farmers able to buy necessaries and live decently they would be a constant market to the city tradesmen as the cityes are to them. But while they have few that buy of them but the rich, so few hands will take off little ; and the tradesmen say that some Greatmen are so bad paymasters that they break the sellers. If the French peasants could weare cloth instead of canvas, and leather instead of wooden-shoes, the cloathiers and shoemakers might have a better trade ; and merchants might have much of the fruits of husbandry to traficke with abroad if it were better encouraged at home.

§ 4. Their poverty will debase the spirit of the Nation, as it hath done the Moscovites, the Polanders and much the French ; and will worke them to Barbarisme and Bruitisme and Atheisme and malignity. It is not a few Lordly oppresseours that render a nation of base inhabitants honourable ! What Landlords more potent over the people than the Polanders, Moscovites, Tartarians, and the Indian Sachems ! And what Masters more absolute than the Turkes and such like ! But no ingenious man can thinke of *their* countreyes but as baser in comparison of the ancient Grecians and Romans.

§ 5. And the dishonour of the countreyemen is the dishonour of the King and Nobles. Who taketh it to be any great honour to be a King of American barbarians or of Guinea or Brasile : To be a King of wise and vertuous people, of men of Learning, Godlines and Justice, is honourable indeed ; but not to be a King of slaves and fooles ! And it is as little honour to be the Lords and Masters of such. Is Ireland and the Scottish Highlands as honourable as England, where their ignorance and slavery to Priests and Lords maketh their very names a reproach ? O let not England so degenerate !

§ 6. And certainly the safety of the Nation is much hazarded by the peoples barbarisme as well as their honour. The militia of a well-

constituted Kingdome should consist of men of known interest, that have something of their owne to defend, and not of mere mercenary slaves that having nothing to value but their lives, will shift for their lives by flight or treachery. And they should be men of discretion that understand their owne and the Kingdome's interest, and for what they are to venture their lives.

§ 7. But the publike interest of religion and the Kingdome of Christ and the common salvation, is farre beyond all the foresaid reasons. Poverty causeth Ignorance by depriving men of ingenious education and the means of knowledge ; and Ignorance is the soile of all errors and wickednes. And knowledge, by necessary helpes, is the parent of all piety and virtue. The naturall and vitall spirits without the animal, difference not a man from a beast. A man cannot love or seeke or use well that which he knoweth not. Wise men have skill and zeale to propagate wisdom ; and Goodness is communicative and tendeth to make others good ! O how greatly in honor and happynes, in the favour of God and the esteeme of men doth a wise, just, godly nation, excell a brutish debauched irreligious land where the people do but strive to corrupt or abuse and deceive, if not also to murder one another ! Was the old world drowned for nothing ; or Sodome burnt for nothing ; or the Jews cast off for nothing ? and are not their names an abhorrence through the world to this day ? O may never England by ignorance be made like Ireland, lest it become like them in errour first, and then in ruine ! For Ignorance is the great preparatory to Popery ; and so our slavery at home prepareth us for slavery to a forreine Pope. Marke whether places of more civil education and converse live not most christian-like, and honour not religion more than places of poverty and constant drudgery, as many forementioned are. If you are Christians, the Kingdome and interest of Christ and the peoples soules will not be so contemptible in your eyes as to be lesse valued than the increase of your rents and money.

§ 8. And surely the soules of the particular persons are precious. Christ thought so, that purchased soules. And every man thinkes so that believeth in Christ. Yea, every man that knoweth what a soule is, and what a man is. And I told you that it is the *soules* of these poore men that I plead for, as concerned in the case more than their bodyes. O pittie them that through poverty and necessity can neither read nor educate their children to read. Pittie them that know not what a

Bible is, to whom it is of no more significance than a chip. Pitty them that have not money to buy a bible, or other suitable needful booke ; and them that, if they have them, have scarce time to read them, and are so taken up with necessity and wearied bodyes that they read not a good book or chapter in their familyes once a week (or once a yeare) nor catechise and instruct their children and servants ; nor have composednes for any meditations, or serious thoughts, of the state of their soules and everlasting life. O pitty them that, coming for custome to the Church in this ignorant alienated case, understand not what the Preacher saith but lose the fruit of all his labour. And what a case then are those of them in, that live under a curate or Priest as senseless of such matters as themselves. Shall we pitty Americans and Infidels Tartarians and Turks, and pray for their conversion ; and shall we not pitty such ignorant ones among ourselves, in a land of light ? The Negroes in Barbadoes and Jamaica live in the same country as the English and not in Guiney.¹ But what the better are they while they are by slavery kept in ignorance ? I confesse your usage of your poor tenants somewhat differeth from that of the Negro slaves. But I would it were yet more different than it is : for it cometh too neere it. I write not this to justifie or excuse the ungodlyness of the poore : I confesse it is unexcusable. For the harder it goeth with them in this world the lesse they should love it ; and the more they should desire a better, and labour the more to make sure of a heavenly glory when they die. They should strive the more against the weaknes of the flesh, and troubling discontents and hurtfull cares ; and they should take those precious houres which they have, and especially improve the Lord's Day, when they are vacant from their labours. Some few that are poore, whose hearts God softeneth, can set their minds on spirituall and everlasting things. Yea, some few that cannot read get others to read to them, and get a good measure of saving knowledge. But this is so rare, and their case so difficult, that I would intreate all Gentlemen so much to pitty soules, as not to plunge them into such temptations and dangers as few do escape.

§ 9. And truly Gentlemen it is your owne concerne as well as theirs :—

1°. You will have more of the losse and suffering if you cause it,

¹ I.e. Guinea.

than the poore. It is a torment to an awakened conscience to have done hurt ; and a great pleasure to have done *good*. Seneca can tell you that *magna peccati poena est peccasse, et magnum beneficii præmium est benefecisse*. You may get a thousand times more by charitable distributions than the poore men get by it to whom you give it. And you will lose more by withholding it than they will lose.

2°. And it is the pleasure of ingenuous loving men to love and to be loved. They imitate the Devil that care not for Love, so they be but feared ; and may, as unresisted tyrants fulfill their proud malicious wills by doing hurt. We love our dogs because they are loving creatures, but poysonous, ravening and cruel animals are hated of all, as made for destruction. How universally is a kind and mercifull Landlord honoured and beloved of all ! With what pleasure do I heare the poore people praise and magnifie some such ! O that they were more ! To have the feare and the labours of a slave is but like driving a cart or coach of horses ; but to have the heart of a Christian is that which God himself regardeth : God saith, *My Son Give me thy heart* : the Devil saith, *serve and feare me lest I torment thee* (yea, *that I may torment thee*) : which will you imitate ? The Christian spirit of Adoption is all for Love. The malignant spirit is for pride, wrath and hurtfulness. He is scarce a man or sociable wight, that had not rather Love and be loved than domineer and be hated. How glad is the Country when they heare of such an one dead or cast down with shame ; I need not name instances in this and former ages. A good name is a precious ointment, though proude hypocrites seeke it for wrong ends : it maketh a man capable of being a publike good. A good Landlord hath the command of the peoples' votes and cheerful services, when others will goe no further than they are driven by rod and spurre. And how good and pleasant is it for brethren to dwell together in unity ! when head and heart and hand and feet do all agree in health and service.

3°. And do you not know how much of your account at the day of your judgment will lie on your usage of the poore and your mercifull or unmercifull dealing with them ? You cannot but know if you reade the Scriptures. If you believe them not, why would you be called Christians ? And do you believe them only to your condemnation, and as the Devils that *believe and tremble* ? Do you not know

that God is the only absolute Proprietor and that the greatest of men have no other propriety than that of stewards or servants, who are trusted with that which is their masters, to be used according to his will. And how neere is the day when you must heare : *Give account of thy stewardship ; thou shalt be no longer steward.* And bethink you what account will then be most comfortable to you ? Read not this with contempt or a senseless heart. It concerneth you more neerly than your Lordships, Lands or Lives. Live as you would be judged.

§ 10. And you have no hope in Christ, if you are not Christians ; and you are no Christians if you believe not Christ ; and if you believe Christ or Moses and the Prophets, consider of these texts which I shall transcribe for you. But the whole Bible is so full, so plaine, so urgent for Love, compassion, mercy, kindness and charity and good workes, and against uncharitableness, tyranny, cruelty, covetousness, oppression, that I will anon in a distinct chapter recite some texts to you, which, if they convince you not, you are blind and obdurate ; and which, if you are convinced and yet will not be converted and reformed, will condemn you. Though I cite them not to condemne you : as Christ said, I came not into the world to condemne the world, when yet he foreknew and foretold how many would eventually be condemned by him.

Chap. 3. The Causes of this Common Evill.

1°. Alas, the causes are so notorious that a few words may serve to make them knowne. But no words alone will serve to cure it.

2°. No doubt but the poore sufferers are the chiefe causes of their owne calamity. Did not their sin provoke God to afflict them, he would have saved them from oppression. Alas if conscience be awake within them they may find enough to condemne themselves for, more than any others ; and to make them cry to God for pardon, more than to accuse the rich. When Cham abused his father, his curse is, *A Servant of Servants shalt thou be.* You may see through all the books of Judges and Kings and Chronicles that when the Israelites sinned against God and did wickedly, he gave [them]

up into the hand of such as did oppress them. And when they repented and cried to him, he delivered them.¹

3°. But this is no excuse to the oppressours. The causes on their part are many and obvious (1) they foolishly so overvalue their Birth and riches, as if these made them more than men ; and Pride setteth them so high in their owne conceit that they look downe on the poore with disregard : as a man in a high mountaine that seeth all below him like little things. They scarcely take the poore for Brethren, no, nor for their neighbours ; as if their flesh were not corruptible, and their sowles by sin as miserable as the poore's. (2) The Love of money the root of all evill, so blindeth and hardeneth them that they can scarce feele any evill in anything that tendeth to increase their wealth. Let them have never so much, they would have more : *Crescit amor nummi quantum ipsa pecunia crescit.* As Nathan told David in his parable, *The man who had flockes of his owne must take the poore man's lamb.* (3) And the Devil, the Great Tyrant, that ruleth in the children of disobedience, maketh them like himselfe, that is pleased with cruelty. When he hath first hardened them against Love and compassion, he next makes them like angry and malicious men that are restlesse till they do hurt. It seemed a great pleasure to a Tiberius, a Nero, a Domitian, etc., to kill men, as it hath done to many persecutors to torment men and to heare them roare. Who would think that the holy Inquisitors should by all their Learning and pretence of Religion be hardened the more to torment men with Racks and Strappados ?² And so many sorts of horrid cruelty, as if they studyed to imitate Hell ? That they can sit in a dark cellar in their grave habits like an infernall consistory, to heare the tormented cry and roare, and get their limbs disjointed ; and direct the executioners how to renew and increase the torment ? When the great Princes of the world can glory in the shambles of persecution and bloody warres ; and triumph when by a victory they have murdered

¹ This seems to be the doctrine of Job's friends that a man's sufferings are somehow a sure sign and measure of his sin. It was common enough in Baxter's day, if not still.

² "A form of punishment or of torture to extort confession in which the victim's hands were tied across his back and secured to a pulley : he was then hoisted from the ground and let down with a jerk." Also = "the instruments used."—*O.D.*

thousands, as if it were the more the better, what wonder if our little Landlord tyrants have small compassion on the poore whom they oppress ! He that seeth in France, in Flanders, in Germany, in Savoy, in Hungary—in Armies and Navies, by land and seas, what a serpentine diabolical disposition is got into humann nature, need not wonder to find some of it here in England. And the Church hath felt that pretense of zeale for learning and church government is no sufficient cure of it : and that Pharisees can use long prayers for a pretense to devoure and ruine those that are better than themselves, and that in some countreys where mischief is established by a Law, the just have sometimes as unjust usage as where armies lie, where *vivitur ex raptu, nec hospes ab hospite tutus*.

4°. And the great cause of oppression is the *sensuality* and *fleshly lusts* of the oppressours. Lust needeth so much that all that they can extort is little enough to feed it. They must be cloathed and fare like Dives sumptuously : with so many dishes and such variety and curiosity, with variety of pleasant liquors, and with musike pompe and so great attendance, in dwellings of so costly furniture, and with the entertainment of so many meerly in pride, for the reputation of greatnes and great housekeeping ; that it is no wonder that the wearyed bodies and carefull¹ hearts of their poore tenants do pay deare for all. Ah, miserable fools ! that thinke this worse than beastly life to be so desirable as, for it, to enslave reason ; to debase human nature ; to damne their sowles ; and to keepe multitudes of their poore brethren in misery to make provision for their lusts.

5°. And the Atheistical misconceit of their propriety hardeneth them. They thinke they may please themselves with *their owne* as they list. As if they knew not that there is no *Absolute Propriety but God's*. Only He that made and maintaineth all is the *absolute Owner* of all, or anything. No man hath any other propriety than that of a Trusted Servant, or Steward, or a child in minority, who is at his father's will. You have a sub-propriety which, *in foro humano*, may be pleaded against all that would dispossess you. And so a servant hath to that which is committed to his trust. We are no Levellers. He is a thiefe that taketh away that which is yours without

¹ I.e., anxious.

your forfeiture or consent. But you shall answer for all, even the uttermost farthing to him that entrusted you. He did not give you your great estates to serve the Devil with them ; in serving your fleshly lusts and pampering a greedy appetite, or maintaining odious pride, when you have cause to be humbled in the dust for your manifold sins, and in remembrance of the dust to which, after its rottenness, your body must returne. You look that your stewards and other servants do keepe and give up a just account to you of all your revenews of which they are the receivers, and of all their disbursements for your use. If you care what becomes of your sowles for ever, cast up and keepe the account of your stewardship towards God. For you shall certainly be called to a reckoning ere long. Compare the proportion which you allow the *poore* and other necessary and pious uses, with that which you have allowed for *flesh-pleasing* and *pompe* and *vaine reputation*. Know that all that is thus abused is stolen from God, in your robbing those of it that he obliged you to give it to.

6°. And when worldlings can enjoy no more for themselves, their last self-deceit is to thinke that, whatever it cost their poore tenants, they must leave their *children* as great and dangerous a temptation of riches as they were undone by themselves. They thinke they deale not as Parents with their children unless they crosse all the doctrine of Christ, and make their way to heaven impossible to any but God, and their Salvation to be as a Camel going through the eye of a needle. Doubtlesse, such show that they are Christians but in jeast. And as they give Christ but a name, they must looke for no more from him. It is themselves and not him that they deceive. They have greater things than great worldly estates and temptations to take care for both for their children and themselves. I know that they must provide for them, and that according to their quality and need. But nothing is due to their posterity that is withheld, or extorted by oppression, from the poore, or from any pious or charitable use that God doth call them to lay it out on.

Chap. 4. The Remedies of the poore Husbandman's case proposed to Rich Landlords.

§ 1. I am not, after so long experience, so ignorant of the pravity of corrupted nature as to expect any universall or generall successe of

anything that I, or any wiser man, can say. The Great Dog will not be moved by argument or Oratory to give up his bone or carrion, nor to let the little dogs partake with him. But there are some, that really believe the Gospell, that are not sufficiently convinced of their duty and sin, in the present case, whom I may write to with some hope ; and there are some men, whose natures are not so desperately debauched and hardened as others to whom we may speake without despaire, who when they heare *Thus saith the Lord* and *thus saith Jesus Xt* will regard it.

§ 2 (Ex. i). Gentlemen (mistake me not) the summe of my request to you is but this *That you will regard the publike welfare of the nation above any few particular cases, and the interest of Christian Religion in the soules of men above all youre worldly interest and fleshly pleasure, and that you will on such accounts, sett youre lands to the poorer sort of youre tenants at such rates as by their labour and frugality they may comfortably live on, so as not to be necessitated by care for their rents and by tiresome excesse of labour, to be strangers to God's word, and to forbear family religion and to be prayerlesse or sleepe when they should pray, and to live in ignorance for want of good bookes or time to read them, and thinke of what they heare at church ; and that poverty constreine them not to educate their children like themselves.* This (is) all that I have now to request of you.

In order to this, I thinke it would be a blessed example to the nation, if to such poore tenants you would abate a third part of your Rack rents. [Some Great ones that know where I was borne, may know what I instance in.¹] When most tenants fifty yeares agoe sate on the old rents, perhaps some one Landlord set his land on the Rack rent from yeare to yeare, and was hardly spoken of for it by all the country. If another come and buy his land and then raise it higher and set that at 50£ or 60£ which he set at 40£, and that at 40£ which he set at 30£, and that at 4£ which he set at 2£ or 3£, may not I justly petition that the poore people may have the clemency of their former rack which they called *Cruelty*? This is no rare case. Few scruple raising rents to as much as they can get, when poore men, rather than beg and have no dwelling, will promise more than they can pay ; and then, with care and toile, make shift as long as they

¹ Crossed through in the MS.

can ; and then run away and do so in another countrey. And so the Gentlemen lose more by their *racking* than they get, whereas if they would abate a third part, and let their tenants live a comfortable life, they might have their rents constantly paid, and have the people's love, and partake of the comforts of those that are benefitted or comforted by them.

§ 3 (ii). To this end I humbly intreate you, Gentlemen, to retrench youre needlesse and sinfull charges for superfluities, prodigality and fleshly lust. That you may not need so much to feed your sin as will not leave you enough to discharge youre duty to God and to the poore. Cannot you live as healthfully and decently with fewer dishes, and less variety, and less cost and curiosity, and less ostentation, attendance and pompe ? Do not youre tables and youre furniture speake unbeliefe and contempt of Christ ? While in Luke 16 and throughout the Gospell he so terribly describeth you. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and such great man of old, that had hundreds of servants and thousands of cattle and sheepe, yet used not to eate flesh but at a feast, or a sacrifice, or the entertainment of some extraordinary friend. Bread and water and milke and honey and butter and figs were their ordinary food. Ordinary eating of flesh and drinking of wine was called *Royotous*. Though God allow us to take away the lives of our fellow creatures and to eate their flesh, to shew what sin hath brought on the world, and what we deserve ourselves, and how we are obliged to resigne our owne lives to the will of God, yet hath he put into all good men that tender compassion to the brutes as will keep them from a senseless royotting in their blood. I am convinced that to eate flesh is lawfull, and yet all my daies it hath gone, as against my nature, with some regret ; which hath made me the more contented that God hath made me long renounce it through the necessity of nature, in my decrepite age.

Read but the Great Physicians that write of health, long life and dyet, and you may see how commonly they agree that *fullness* and *variety*, hindering perfect concoction and causing excrementious crudities, is the cause of most diseases, and the ordinary brevity of mans life ; and that Temperance, and due abstinence, a simple easy and slender dyet, for quality and quantity, causeth a perfect digestion, purity of blood, and all the nutritious juices, health of body, chearfullnes of mind, fitness for study and busynes and devotion, and a long life, and

an easy death. For one I referre you to *Claudius Deodatus*¹ in his *Hygiasticon*, Lib. i. ; or, if you understand not Latine, reade my *quondam* physician Dr. Venner,² his *Via recta ad vitam longam*. But what need you more than painfull experience ? *Who* have most of the stone and strangury and gowte and dropsies and other such diseases that make life miserable and short ? Is it the abstemious and temperate and laborious ? Or the rich and idle that live in fullness and delicious variety ? Perhaps you will object the seeming crosse-instances of such as myselfe. But if a man in youthfull folly contract infirmity by pleasing his appetite, and his after abstinence helpe him for sixty yeares to beare the diseases that his folly caused, you must not impute his diseases to his abstinence, which was his remedy. How many may you read of in physicions that have been cured of sore diseases by temperance : I need not send you to Lessius,³ Cornario,⁴ or Sir W. Vaughan.⁵ I tried their measure fifty yeares agoe and I find it now too longe by more than halfe (and to the quality tenfold too large, about flesh meates). Many German Physicians tell you of a rich man that, having long had a painfull gowt, fell into so great poverty by losses that he was forced to a poore dyet, and to carry a pedlar's pack about the countrey to get his living, and he was cured of his gowt. Felix Platonis⁶ tells you of one that was sickly from his childhood, and after marriage grew much worse, and specially with the gowt : and he resolutely forbore wines, and used a slender dyet, and

¹ The full title was :—*Pantheum hygiasticum Hippocratico—hermeticum, de hominis vita ad centum et viginti annos salubrite producenda, libris tribus distinctum etc.*—*Bruntrati* 1628, 4^o.

² Tobias Venner (1577-1660). His first book—"Via recta ad vitam longam ; or A Plaine Philosophicall Discourse of the Nature, Faculties and Effects of all such things as by way of nourishments and Dieteticall Observations made for the Preservation of Health . . . with the true use of our Bathes of Bath"—was published in 1620. He preached and died at Bath ; and it was to him that Baxter resorted from the siege of Bristol (Sept., 1646) when he fell suddenly ill (*R.B.* i. 55). See *D.N.B.*

³ Less(ius) Leonhard, Jesuit moralist (1554-1623). In 1613 his "*Hygiasticon seu vera ratio valetudinis bonae et vitae . . . ad Extremam senectutem cōservandae*" was published at Antwerp.

⁴ Janus Cornarius (1500-1558) German physician.

⁵ William Vaughan (1577-1641) poet and colonial pioneer—of Golden Grove, Carmarthenshire. From childhood he was devoted to the study of medicine and wrote on the subject, though never a physician. (See *D.N.B.*)

⁶ Felix Platonis ? (1536-1614) M.D. of Basle.

dranke only *Loram* (its called Bunnell¹ in our countrey) which is made of mellow crabs and bulles or crab-plums and some Barberries, put into a vessel of spring water, so much as may give it a pleasant sharpness and austerity, which he greatly delighted in, and lived in health to about eighty years of age, though he fed on Cabbage, Turnips and such coarse meat. Another he mentioneth that, at a great age, was cured of the gowt, only with temperance and the constant use of Belony, infusion, decoction, powder, conserve, in all his meate and drinke. Such instances are common. And is paine, sicknes, and death worth the buying at the rate that your gluttony and voluptuousness costeth you and others?

§ 4 (iii). And I humbly motion that Gentlemen would not be strangers to their poore tenants; but sometimes go to their howses and see how it goeth with them, and how they live. When I was a child I have heard a poore man praise a neighbour Knight² with as much honour as if he had been a Prince, because he would come to a poore man's house and talke familiarly to them, and looke into their pot and cupboard and see how they fared; but a proud disdainfull person none loveth. Did you see their manner of food and labour, and their wants, it would move you more than hearing will do. Strangeness causeth ignorance and neglect.

§ 5 (iv). And when you visit them or speake with them, ask them, *Do you pray in your family? Do you read God's word and good bookes, especially on the Lord's dayes? Do youre children learne to read? Do you teach them the Catechisme, and how to pray? Do you keepe them from lying and swearing and cursing and railing?*

If they say, *No*, to any of these enquire the *reason* of it. Do not say this is only the Parson's work. It is *his* and it is *yours*. They will heare you with more regard than most such will heare the Pastor. O what a blessed example were this, for a Lord or Knight to set the Gentry of his Country! and what good might such men's wealth and greatness do, which are commonly used to their owne and others hurt! And what a blessed land would England be, if Lords, Knights, and Gentlemen would duely obey and worship God in their owne families as well as in the Churches and urge their tenants to do the like.

¹ Bunnell = "a beverage made from the crushed apples or pears, after nearly all the juice has been expressed for the cider or perry."

² Sir Richard Newport, of High Ercall?

§ 6 (v). Those that have not a Bible or good book in their houses, buy and give them one. I told you in the preface¹ to my *Poore Mans Family Booke* that one or two bookes to every poore tenant is but abating them so much of their rent, extraordinary, or abating one dish of meat from your tables, what if I said one gaudy lace or toy from the woemens coates or heads? And it need be but once to one house while they live there: for a booke may so long endure.

§ 7 (vi). Enquire whether their children be sent to schoole to learne to read. And if not, or there be none thereabout to teach them, a little money may hire an honest poore man or woaman to set up a reading schoole. At least, pay for those childrens' learning whose parents cannot pay for them. There dwelleth in London a man that liveth by selling rags and glasse bottles, that, besides finding worke for abundance of the poore, payeth for the teaching of about thirty poore children; though he had not five shillings to set up, and his nearest friends trouble him with the accusations of imprudent excesse of charity. And he saith that God tells him of his acceptance. For the more he giveth the more he thriveth: which made that blessed example of charity, my deare friend Mr. *Th. Gouge*,² to write a book for charity entitled *The way to grow rich*. There be men that have many thousand pounds per annum that dwell neere this poore glass man that do no such work and do not increase their wealth. I will instance but in one man, my deceased friend Mr. Thomas Foley,³ the 3rd son of Mr. Richard Foley, my first Patron; who began but with 500£ stock, given him by his father; and was allwaies liberall to the poore, and managed all his busynes with multitudes, with ease and chearfullnes; and hath setled an Hospitall with a Govenour to teach children to read and write and fit them for trades, and then bind them apprentices; and setled, in land, 500£ a yeare to maintaine it. And God so prospered him that his three sons, now all

¹ "If every landlord would give one to every poor Tenant that he hath, once in his life, out of one year's rent, it would be no great charge in comparison of the benefit which may be hoped for, and in comparison of what prodigality consumeth. The price of one ordinary dish of meat will buy a Book: and to abate for every Tenant, but one dish in your lives, is no great self-denial." "A Request to the Rich" (Preface to the said Book). 26 Aug., 1672.

² (1609-1681) see *R.B.*, iii. 17, 94, 147, 148, 190 and *D.N.B.*

³ (1617-1677) see *R.B.*, i., 13; iii., 71, 93 and *D.N.B.*

Parliament men, are judged worth 15000£ a year between them (whom I do hopefully request to use it as charitably as their father did, who lived neither sordidly nor luxuriously nor profusely, as those great men that thinke their pompous grandeur worthy of more than he gave to the poore).

§ 8 (vii). And I humbly advise all Parish Ministers, whose office obligeth them to know and visit the poore, that (besides their owne charity) they will acquaint the rich Landlords with their poore tenants' cases, and move them to compassion. I doubt not but all pious and charitable Gentlemen will take it well, and thank them.

§ 9 (viii). And I humbly intreate all *Lawyers* and *Physicians* that they will spare the poore in their fees and charges. Alas, a shilling is to them more precious than twice its weight of their blood. Had not approaching death and modesty forbidden me, I had (though no physician) published a Directory for every ingenious Minister to become the parish physician for the poore (when they have not better), without leaving them to ignorant women, or to be helplesse ; and without going themselves beyond the bounds of their knowledge ; and without putting them unto much cost to the Apothecary for loathsome compositions.

§ 10 (ix). One thing more for the poore I intreate of Ministers and Landlords ; that they will keep them from Lawsuites by composing all differences that arise among them ; and by persuading them to a just reference and arbitration, and by discountenancing the contentious and revengefull refusers. O if we had hopes that piety and humanity and the English honour would be so farre repaired by such reasonable meanes as these, as that the nation may not by poverty and slavery be debased, and degenerate to impiety and barbarisme, and poore mens' houses may not be strangers to God's Word and worship nor the labours of ministers frustrated by the incapacity of their hearers !

§ 11 (x). I have yet one helpe more to motion, that *Rich men will often read what all God's word saith of their duty to the poore*. Surely the passages of this kind are so *many*, so *urgent* and so *plaine* that, without downright unbeliefe and contempt of Christ, and of God's Law, or without great stupidity, they cannot be so neglected as by most they are, were they but seriously considered : so earnest are the commands, so great the promises, to charity and so terrible the threatenings to the oppressour and unmercifull that they must needs

move a considerate believer to thinke money laid out on the poore to be better used than that which is sacrificed to *Bacchus* and *Venus*, as a sacrifice to pride and flesh pleasing, and, as *Clemens Alexandrinus*¹ calls it : to the *Throat-madnes* and the *Belly Devil*.

Chap. 5. Some pertinent Texts recited to this use.²

Who can prevaile if God's authority cannot ? and what can we think will move men if not the Law which they confesse should rule them and will judge them ?

How severely did God revenge the oppression of the Israelites on Pharao and the Egyptians by his plagues and the red sea :

Texts quoted are :—

Exodus, i., 11, 13, 14 ; ii., 23-24 ; iii., 7-8 ; xxii., 23-24, 25-26 ; xxxiii., 11.

Leviticus, xix., 9, 13, 18 ; xxx., 35-36.

Deut., xv., 7 (—11), 12 (—14).

1 Samuel, xii., 3.

Nehemiah, v., 11-13, 18.

Job, xxix., 12 (13, 15, 16, 17) ; xxxi., 16 (—22, 24, 25, 38).

Psalms, xii., 5 ; xli, 1 (—3) ; lxxii., 4, 12 ; cxii., 9.

Proverbs, xiv., 21, 31 ; xxi., 13 ; xxii., 9, 16, 22, 23 ; xxviii., 15 ; xxix., 7, 12, 14 ; xxxi., 9 : xxviii., 27.

Eccles., v., 8.

Isaiah, i., 16 ff., 23, 24 ; iii., 14, 15 ; lviii., 6, 7 (Read the whole chapter).

Ezekiel, xvi., 49, 50 ; xviii., 5 (—9).

Amos, iv., 1 (2).

Isaiah, lx., 17.

Ezekiel, xlv., 9.

Matthew, v., 5, 7, 16, 42 ; vi., 19, 20, 33, 34 ; vii., 12, 19 ; xiii., 44, 45 ; xviii., 5-7, 14, 8, 9, 10, 32 ; xix., 21, 22 ; xx., 26 ; xxii., 36, 37, 38 ; xxvi., 11 ; xxv., 31, 41.

Luke, xii., 20, 21 ; xvi., 9, 13, 14, 20. (Read all that of Dives and Lazarus) ; xix., 8. Read the Parable of the Wounded Man, the Prieste, Levite and Samaritan (Luke x. 25-31).

John, xiii., 4, 35, 36 ; xxi., 15.

¹ (b. circa A.D. 150.)

² A striking feature of the "de excidio" is the catena of texts extending more or less through chapters 37 to 105. Gildas calls them the words of the Holy Prophets (Sancti Vates) and cites indifferently from the Apocryphal or Canonical books. Baxter keeps strictly to the canonical. Space forbids the quotations *in extenso*.

Acts, iv., x., 2.

Romans, ii., 6; xii., 5; xiii., 9, 10, 14.

1 Corinthians, vi., 7, 8, 9; ix., 8, 9; xii., 12, 13; xiii.

2 Corinthians, ix., 6, 7.

Galatians, vi., 2, 6, 7, 8.

Ephesians, iv., 32.

Philippians, iv., 17.

Colossians, iii., 14.

1 Thessalonians, iv., 9.

1 Timothy, vi., 17.

Titus, iii., 5.

Hebrews, xiii., 1, 2, 3, 16.

James, i., 27 (Read all James ii., especially 6, 13); iii., 17; iv., 1.

1 Peter, i., 22; iii., 8.

1 John, ii., 15, 16; iii., 14, 27, 23; iv., 7; iii., 7.

Revelation, ii.; iii.; xx.; xxii., 12, 14.

Qu.—*Why need you transcribe so much of the bible? Do you thinke we never read or heard all this before?*

Ans.—I suppose you have. If you practise it, I have my end. If not, I do it to try whether the fullest proove from the Supreme Authority of God, will prevaile with you. If it will not, what can all my reasonings do? If you can be unmercifull and rigorous exactors from the poore after all this, if Lazarus were sent to you when you are at your pompous entertainments and cherishing your fleshly appetites to tell you what Dives suffereth that you come not to that place of torment you would not be persuaded. But all these words of God your Judge shall be witnesses against you.

Chap. 6. Objections Answered.

We must not hope to prevaile with men for so great a good and against so much of their fleshly and worldly reason and delight, without much contradiction. As God governeth men as rationall and therefore convinceth their Reason of their Duty, so Satan tempteth men as Rationall, and by perverting his *Reason* by deceit. There is no duty so great that men refuse, nor any sin so great which they live in, but they will give a *Reason* for it. They will not disobey God himself, nor his plainest word, nor resist Christ, nor damme themselves, without Reason. Yea, I look to be derided by Rich men for this which God so vehemently commandeth; and Heathens by the light of nature know.

Obj. I.—We rob no man ; we defraud no man ; we require nothing but our owne, which we may use as our case requireth.

Ans. (1) The Priest and the Levite that past by the wounded man took nothing from him ; and Dives (Luke 16) tooke nothing from Lazarus. The damned servant that hid his talent tooke it not from his Master. But he was cast into outer darkness.

(2) I again tell you, though it be your owne against the claime of men, *in foro humano*, nothing is your owne against God's claime. All is His and its yours but as stewards ; and you must do with it *what He will* ; and must labour to know his will, that you may do it. You may not use one penny but according to his will.

Obj. II.—We expend no more than we have reason for. Lords and Knights must not live like their poore tenants. He that hath divers thousand pound per annum hath as much necessary use for that as poore men have for their little.

Ans. (1) I speak not for levelling or equality ; nor against your truly necessary or just expenses. They that are intrusted with publike employment must defray the charges of it, and maintaine servants to perform it ; and they that have great estates must keepe servants to looke after them ; and they that (not for Pride but) for publike service must by entertaining their rich neighbours keep up the interest of their reputation, may be for it at so much charge as no greater good or antecedent necessary duty doth forestall. But God alloweth you nothing to expend on a Lesser good, which a Greater duty requires : *Greater*, I say, *to you* and such as you are obliged to. Be not, therefore, self-deceivers. Bethink you whether expending so many hundreds or 1000^s a yeare in costly buildings, furniture, bravery, attendance, useless yea, hurtfull variety and fullness, and entertaining luxurious persons, be a greater duty than relieving and easing the burdened poore. A temperate frugall man can live perhaps at halfe the rate that you do, in better reputation with all sober wise men. He that glutteth his flesh and serveth his pride and fancie with as much as they desire, is no true servant of God, though he should give to church and poore, many 1000£, being but the leavings of his lust and sin. How much worse then is he that giveth nothing to Lazarus but his scraps ! God will not be served acceptably with that which costeth your flesh nothing. Make not a seeming necessity to yourselves. When Martha preferred providing for Christ himselfe before the present

hearing of his word, he reproveth her with a *Thou art troubled about many things; One thing is needfull: Mary hath chosen the good part which shall not be taken from her.* And are your guests better than Christ? or can you better pretend necessity than Martha? How rashly do you differ in judgment from him that you call your Lord and Saviour! He saith, when thou makest a feast call not the Rich etc.; *But call the poore etc. that cannot recompense thee.* How little of your great estates do you expend in such feasting, or in answerable reliefe of them?

(2) For one that in his Baptisme renounced the *Devil, the world and the flesh* to make the serving of that which he, by his vow of Christianity, renounced, his justified pretense, against the serving of Christ with his owne, is the most impudent self-condemning plea that you could use. The condemned slothful servant had more modesty than to say: *Lord my throat and belly and my pride, had so much need of thy talent, that I could not spare it for the use that thou requiredst.*

(3) St. Augustine's name is justly honoured by many of you; and his conscience was much wrought upon by those words Rom. 13, *Not in Gluttony and drunkennes, not in chambering and wantonnes, not in strife and envying; But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust (or will) thereof.*

Obj.—*But all cannot be saints?*

Ans.—Therefore all shall not be saved: for heaven is a place for none but saints. Without Holynes none shall see God—Heb. 12, 24.

Obj. III.—*God giveth us his Creatures for Delight and not only for necessity.*

Ans. (1) He alloweth you no *Delight* but that which tendeth to fit you for his service by refreshing your body and spirits, and tendeth to make Him your chief delight from whom they come and to whom they tend. It is the great marke of wickedness to be *Lovers of pleasure more than Lovers of God.*

(2) I speak not against that usefull Delight in lawfull things, which is but as *whetting* to the *mower's* scithe, that you may work the better. I am not calling you all into Monasteries or Hermitages. But hath God and his service your *chiefe* delight? Do you more

pleasedly read God's word and pray in your families and teach them and relieve the poore, than satisfye an inordinate desire of the flesh, or make ostentation of your grandure ? O miserable self-condemning hypocrites that live to their lust with graceless hearts and prayerlesse families, and do God no serious service all the day, but spend part of it in feasting and the rest in idle visits or sports, and then say, *Delight is lawfull to them*, while they do nothing of that which lawfull recreation should fit them for ! As if the mower should do nothing but *whett* (and lie down), and say that *whetting* is lawfull ! When these men are so farre from Delighting in God, and in doing good, that they take it for a melancholy unpleasant toile.

Obj. IV.—“ *You that live in corners and on your dung-hills are unfitt judges of our condition. Every self-conceited zealot will presume to talke of that which he understandeth not* and to tell Lords and Knights how they must live and use their estates.”

Ans.—Hath not Christ himselfe told you more closely than we do ? If you take this for self-conceitednes or sauceynes, what would you have said to Christ if you had heard him say what is recorded in the Gospel ? If easing your burdened oppressed tenants seems so hard to you, what would you have said if he had tryed you as he did a rich man with a *Goe and sell all that thou hast and follow me, and thou shalt have a treasure in heaven ? I doubt you would [have] gone away scorningly rather than sorrowfully. As the Pharisees that, being covetous derided him. You think that this doctrine savours of the Levellers or Quakers. What would you have done if you had lived when the Spirit of Love made all the Christians sell all that they had and live in common ? Though that was but for one place and time, when they were, however, to have been driven from their estates, yet sincere Charity that Loveth another as ourselves is necessary in all times and places.*

Do not your preachers that you heare in publike and your Chaplains, unless they be worldly flatterers, preach this same doctrine to you, and tell you what a damning sin Luxury, Sensuality, Oppression and uncharitableness is, and that if you turne away your eyes and eares from the poore, God will turne away his eare from you in the houre of your distresse ? And do you take such preaching for presumptuous meddling with your estates ? Gentlemen, you are as

a city built on a hill that cannot be hid. If you be ungodly and licentious the world will know it. Hypocrisie may be hid, but so cannot open Luxuriousnes and Oppression. If such as I know you not, I hope it is no fault to desire that you may know yourselves. If you are men of godlynes and mercyfullnes, and your familyes and poore tenants find it, our admonitions will but help your consciences to comfort you. Piety and Charity are with great men so rare as that the preciousnes of them inclineth all people to praise and honour such. If you can prove that the Gospell of Christ doth justifie you, fear not men's censuring you. And though within a few generations youre good and bad deeds will be forgotten on earth, they will be remembered to you and by you for ever. And a *hic jacet* notifying what earth was made of your deare-fed flesh, will not so level your souls with the faithfull.

Obj. V.—Do you thinke we give not to the poore because we proclaim it not to you : or, that we cannot better know fit objects than you ? Must you tell us to whom we must give ?

Ans. (1) We may and must tell you in generall though we name not the particulars, till they name themselves by visible need. Christ hath told you, and it is our office to proclaim what He commandeth.

(2) If your poore Tenents feel it, and if your consciences witnesse it, that you bestow more on the needy than on your sensuality, we are satisfied.

Obj. VI.—“ Every man is neerest himselfe. Charity begins at home. Others shall have what I can spare. Every man for himselfe and God for us all.”

Ans. (1) God will be a Saviour to none that is not more for the common good and the pleasing of God than for himselfe. He is no true disciple of Christ that denyeth not himselfe in obedience to him. Begin at home but do but begin there and not goe further !

(2) O that you would be kind and liberall, or at least not cruel, to yourselves. It is most to yourselves that we persuade you to be mercifull. David saith (Psal. 16), “ My goodnes extendeth not to thee ” : God needeth you not nor will be beholden to you. If it be not more for [your] owne gaine than for the poore's ; and your oppression will not hurt yourselves more than them, the Gospell is not to be believed. But if it be so, O have some pitty on your

owne soules and sell not as prophane your birthright for a morsell : your everlasting happines for beastly sensuality and pride.

Obj. VII.—“The poore live as well on their course fare and labours as we do on our plenty. Their food is as sweet to them and their rest as pleasant : Their condition is as suitable to them as ours is to us.”

Ans. (1) And perhaps much more, as I said before. No thanks to you. Lazarus may have more inward peace at your gates, while the dogs are licking his sores, than you in your jollity. But if you afflict them, God’s comforting them will not excuse you.

(2) But it is not those that have a comfortable competency, though with labour and course fare, that I am pleading for. It is not that they may live in fleshpleasing fulnes as you doe. But for those whose poverty, care and labour is such an impediment to their religious knowledge and practice, their worship of God and the education of their children as they cannot overcome. It is more for their *soules*’ and the *Nation’s* than their *flesh* that I plead.

Obj. VIII.—“We have children to provide for that must have portions answerable to their birth and quality ; and whence should we have it but out of our tenants and estates ?”

Ans.—You meane that they must be left as Rich as you are, or as you can make them. For whatever men be, though they be *novi homines*, suddenly risen from a low estate, the parents looke their children should be enricht accordingly. But (1) Give your children nothing but *your owne*. That is none of your owne which God hath obliged you otherwise to give or use. When Zaccheus said, *Halfe of my goods I give to the poore*, was he bound to give that halfe to his children ? Will you rob Peter to cloath Paul ? Will you oppresse the poore to enrich your children ? Your children may feare God’s curse on such riches.

(2) O that you knew how small a kindness it is to your children to be made rich beyond a competency ! And to have so strong temptations to flesh-pleasing, idlenes and pride as a full table and provision for carnall delights do usually prove ! And, as I said before, to have their salvation as difficult as Christ hath told such ! What were the sins of cursed Sodome : Ezekiel 16 ? *Pride, idlenes, fullnes of bread, and not being mercifull to the poore*. Gentlemen, I beseech you, see that, seeing this is God’s own discription of them, you

write not SODOME on your own doores. (And I would unclean lust were not added with yours.) If you do, the destroying Angell in due time, will read it, and will not passe by you unrevenged. Do you think if Lazarus had bin sent to the five brethren of damned Dives, that they would have believed him, or have left their sensual life? or, would they not have taken him for a deceiving spirit that by a *Scandalum magnatum* said their brother was in hell? or, would they not reason for the flesh as you now do?

(3) But I confesse that you ought to take care of your posterity; and if you have a son that is so pious and wise as to be like to use his riches for the publike good, I wish you would leave him the more as God's steward, not so much for his own sake as for many others. But not so as to forbear your owne part, which may further your owne account. And how sad a case is it for men that have wicked children, to study to make them rich and great to serve the Devill with the greater advantage!

Obj. IX.—“We are kept under by taxes and publike contributions to the King and for the warres. The maine weight lyeth on the Landlords. We have voluntarily in Parliament taken it on ourselves. And would you also deprive us of our Rents?”

Ans. (1) Who should pay money but those that have it? and who should pay dearer for the publike safety than they that have most to loose? We are so farre from grudging at just taxes that we would have them reach to all that are able. But proportionably, according to the difference of other mens ability and yours. He is unworthy of a part in the common peace that will not by purse and labour contribute to it. But remember Christ's decision: the poore widow that offered her two mites gave more than the greater sums of the rich that gave but out of their abundance. If a poore tenant give a shilling, perhaps he giveth all. If one that hath 4000£ per annum give 1000£ or 2000£ in taxes, he hath 2000£ or 3000£ still left; and he is scarce worthy the name of a man that cannot contentedly live on so much. A farmer that payeth you 50£ a yeare rent, would thinke him unreasonable that cannot live thankfully on 50£ or 100£ per annum of free land. Perhaps one of 2000£ or 3000£ a yeare thinks he must give with his daughters 3000£ or 4000£ apiece. And what if you give your daughter 1000£ the lesse, and pay the

1000£ for taxes? May not your daughter live comfortably and contentedly without it?

(2) *You* do but give your *money*; but poore men give their *lives* for the publike service by sea and land. While you sit warme at home out of feare and danger, they are night and day in suffering and perill. If any of the Great Generations goe to command them, it is too often those that have prodigally wasted their estates at home, and must have large pay for their large desires. It were well with us by sea and land, if there were fewer such; and men were trusted more that can endure the hardships of souldiers and need not large provision for their lusts: so be it that their Generall Officers were men of interest, authority and skill. Is not the poore man's flesh and yours of the same materialls and temper? Can they beare cold and hunger and labour and abuses and danger of death, without sense, any more than you? Its strange to observe the power of education and custome in fleshly pleasures and worldly estates. Should a poore labourer be made worth 50£ or 100£ a yeare, he would think himselfe as happy as a Prince. And should a Rich Lord or Knight or Esq. be brought downe from thousands to 100£ a year, yea, or to 200£ or 300£, he would live as sadly as if he were undone. I am not offended with you for laying excise and taxes on silks and laces and tapestry or wines or tobacco or anything that such as you are the buyers of. They are fooles that sell them if they will not make you pay it all. Should Ladyes wear the badges of —— in their gold, silver, silk, embroideryes, and gawderies on free cost? Yea and teach their chambermaids (woemen I mean) and their kitchen maides to goe in silks and stage attire (as the soldiers wear the Generall's Colours) and not pay for it! But its most reasonable that Landlords pay for their lands; and that Lands, being the *basis* and *stamen* of the Kingdom's wealth and Interest, the publike maintenance should be laid upon them.

Obj. X.—“All this is but from the Levelling Spirit of Popularity and by lifting up the vulgar to take down the nobility and gentry and at last the King, and to teach the people to cry down Monarchy and cry up a Common Wealth.”

Ans.—To those that impudently joyn their wickednes with such malicious slanders, I will speak more freely than to modest men. (1) Had you not been bred up from your childhood in brutish

pleasure, in voluptuous eating and drinking and sport and gaming and wantonness and idleness instead of learning and godliness and sobriety, you would not have been such ignorant Sots, as thus to abuse the name of a COMMON WEALTH, as to talke against it as signifying a *Democracy*, when as it is the *Genus* to Monarchy and *Aristocracy* also. And Monarchy is the best species (in most countreys) of a Commonwealth. When as the Commonwealth is constituted of King and Subjects, you cry downe the King when you cry downe a Commonwealth. The Ignoramuses seem not to know that the common welfare is so essentially the *Terminus* of the Policie, that to exclude it is to dissolve all the Policie, Kingdom and State. Had you been bred as Selden¹ and Hale² and such men of study were, or as statesmen are bred in France, Holland and Germany, you would better know what a Commonwealth is. If any, knowing it, do knavishly use the word to raise an odium on better men, their knavery will find them out at last. But must we now be befool'd by them ?

(2) It is such as you that foolishly and fraudulently endeavour to set up Democracy or Anarchy, while you make the people's burden heavy, and make them groan as the Israelites in Egypt. You force them to discontent and to desire a change. Uneasyness and paine will put men still to look every way about them for some reliefe and ease. Doth he wrong oppressors then of the common people that saith, They are enemies to the King and Kingdome. Hence it is that the *despairing* poore have bin the Conquerors of the world. The Arabians and such base people have set up the Turkish Monarchy. How much of the world did Tamerlane with his Tartarians conquer in a little time ? And what an invincible enemy are the barbarous Tartarians to this day ! The wild Picts first, and the rude Saxons next, and the rude Danes next, did conquer England ; and Gildas will tell you that the British Princes and Bishops by their wickedness and oppression were the cause. The Goths, Ostrogoths, Huns and other barbarous nations conquered the great Roman Empire, being driven some by poverty and some by violence from their owne country ; and bringing their wives and children and all

¹ John Selden (1584-1654). See *D.N.B.*

² Sir Matthew Hale (1609-1676). See *R.B.*, iii., 47, 175, 181, and *D.N.B.*

that they had, resolved to live and die where they came and never to returne home. Salvian giveth you a full account how farre Christians at home were the cause. There is no standing before the multitude if they be but armed with despair. While you coope them up in your pens they are as always boaking to get out. And if a turne of affaires do give them opportunity, you will feel it. Interest ruleth the world. Use the people so well that they may feel that peace and obedience and the Kingdom's defense is their interest, and you take the most probable way of publike safety. But how miserable is that nation that is ridden by such fools as thinke they ride not well but on a tired horse, because a pampered horse may cast them ; and that thinke a Kingdom's best and safest when it is unmanned and serves as slaves in chaines and fetters.

Obj. XI.—“ You could not have chosen a more needlesse and unreasonable a subject. Our Lands are growne so cheape that we cannot get tenants for them : some howses stand empty a yeare together. And some run away when they should pay their rent. And are you perswading us out of the little that is left ? ”

Ans. (1) Still remember that it is none but Rich Landlords that have great numbers of tenants, that I speake of. I know that some men that cannot use their owne land, if they have but 20£ or 40£ a yeare, must set it to others that perhaps may need charity no more than themselves. Nor do I speak of your tenants that are rich or put to no great streights. This presupposed. (2) I answer you : This that you say is true as to matter of fact and its like to be more so ere long. Now Ireland is to be, as it were, replanted, multitudes will goe thither for better Landlords and bargaines : as many do to Jamaica, New Jersey, Carolina, Maryland, Virginia, Barbados. Bermudas, New England. But all this is long of you that drive them away by extremity. If you would abate their rents so farre as they might live comfortably like men, and like Englishmen, and Christians, they would neither turne up your tenements nor run away or quitt the land. Men naturally love their country and hate changes, and long and dangerous vogages (except rash lads that never were your tenants). They would take hard termes at home rather than be at the cost and trouble and danger of a remove. Take but 20£ instead of 30£ or 25£, and you may have it constantly paid you. I speak but according to my small narrow experience. I was borne

but to five tenements of freehold as my patrimony. Though I never took a farthing in my life for any of them for myselfe (having a multitude of poore kindred that must have that and as much more as I can spare) yet for them I sett all to Tenants that never offer to remove. The small Tenements I give them leases freely and take little rent, and none of one. The bigger Tenement I let at 30£ per annum which men say is worth 40£ or neere ; and the Tenants are well contented. And I talke not of London howses, where rents fall and broaken fellows get in to deceive the Landlord. I have 350£ for a lease of 60 yeares to a company : when my first tenant's time was out, I could get a promise but of half the former rent ; my friends put in a tenant that, after two yeares, ran away and left his children on the Parish, and left 12£ of ground-rent to pay, and fifty shillings for other things ; and he never paid me one farthing (though it was in Friday Street). So I gave away my howse for nothing that I might have no more such costly howses (though I have neither Howse, land or Salary that I receive a penny from). So that I do not partially perswade others to what I would not do myselfe, nor do I talke of London houses. But if Great men would abate their Rack-rents to the poore toying husbandmen in England and Wales, it would be their owne and the kingdome's gaine. I know there are many worthy Religious and Merciful Gentlemen that practise what I exhort others to ; who, as the Samaritan, know *Who is their neighbour*, and take every poor Tenant to be a Brother and a member of the same body with themselves, and Love them accordingly, being *taught of God to Love another : qui monet ut facias* etc. My admonition to others is the praise of these, and to them it is but that they persevere and increase, and be not weary of well-doing, for in due time they shall reape if they faint not. God hath made those men's liberality to the poore to be *easy* and *cheape* and *comfortable* to them. Its *easy*, because God hath not only saved them from that pride and sensuality which makes the luxurious waste sinfully what they should give to the poore, but hath made them hate so brutish a life. It is *cheape*, because they spare it from the devouring sensuality which wasteth the Estates of the voluptuous ; and it is *comfortable* because Love taketh pleasure in doing good, and because they believe that though they are unprofitable servants and do but their duty, yet, as faithfull stewards, they have the promise of a plentiful everlasting reward ; and that

he that improved ten talents shall be ruler over ten cityes, and shall enter into the Joy of his Lord. And I have the rather so largely recited the Scripture texts for good works, lest any of the Libertine Generation should infect you, that know not how to *exalt Christ* and extoll *free grace* without crying downe Christ's Kingly Government and Lawes, and our obedience and its motives, and say, as *Crispe*,¹ that nothing that we do will do us any good, nor must we look to be ever the better for it, because Christ hath done all for us and we did it by him ; nor will any sin do us any harm, because it is Christ's sin that hath taken it on him and not ours, or, as *Saltmarsh*,² that *Christ hath repented and believed for us*. Christ hath done good works for them : and will they rejoyce that Christ is glorified and not they, and say, It is for us ? Peruse the Texts that I have so largely cited, and then nothing but obstinate prejudice or contempt of Scripture, can keep you from abhorring this *Crispian, Anti-Christian Libertinisme*.

Chap. 7. Advice to poore unrelieved Husbandmen.

Because the knowledge of the wickednes of the world perswades me that it is not the most of Rich Landlords that all this will prevail with, yea that there is little hope that they will so much as read it, I will speake to you for yourselves : And if you will not be perswaded to do good to yourselves you are unworthy of clemency or helpe from others.

I. Know what are the Temptations of your sufferings, and carefully resist them. (1) Your poverty will tempt you to sinfull discontent and to repining at God's providence, yea and to hard thoughts of God, and to unthankfullnes for all the mercyes that you have had or that yet you have. And all these are sins which are an hundred times worse than poverty.

(2) Your poverty will tempt you to uncharitable thoughts and speeches of your oppressours, and hinder you from loving and forgiving

¹ Tobias Crisp (1600-1643) antinomian, whose son, by republishing his works—4 vols. of Sermons—in 1690, excited a great controversy on the subject of grace and works which troubled Baxter's last days.

² John Saltmarsh (d. 1647). He and William Dell (d. 1664) "were the two great Preachers at the Head Quarters," while Baxter was with the Army (1645-47), *R.B.*, i., 56.

them ; and will tempt you to envy the rich ; and to overvalue riches, while you too much feelee your wantes. Yea, many poore men that cannot get riches, do thinke highlyer of them than those that have them : because the owners are still unsatisfyed, while the afflicted still feel their need.

(3) Your poverty will tempt you to unlawfull wayes of getting, and to thinke that necessity will excuse you, that is, to steale, to overreach others in bargaining or accounts, to use unlawfull trades, to lie, or deale unjustly.

(4) Your poverty will tempt you to omit religious dutyes in your familyes (if not in secret and at the church), and to cast by God's word and prayer and meditation, and to thinke and talke of nothing but the *world*, and to neglect the instruction and godly education of your children, or to do all this heartlessly, heavily and slightly. All this must be considerately prayed and watched against. How oft have I heard some proud fooles tell me that they goe not to church for want of cloaths, as if the Cloaths that they work in may not serve to pray in : some beggars are proud.

II. Understand also what Advantages your poverty giveth you, above the rich and prosperous worldlings ; and then you will find that the benefit may weigh downe all your losses. Think of these following.

(1) Is it not a comfort to be so farre conformed to Christ who for our sakes became *poore* that we by his poverty might be made rich. His voluntary poverty, who was Lord of all, was part of his Humiliation as a sacrifice for our sins ; and he that hath sanctified *death* to us as our passage to eternall life hath sanctified our sufferings in the way to death. He that hath predestinated us to glory hath predestinated us to be conformed to Christ in his sufferings.

(2) How great a helpe have you, to escape the too much love of this present world, and to drive you most seriously to seeke a better. If you will love a poore miserable life of trouble better than heaven, you are more unexcuseable than the rich that have a life of pleasure. If you that cannot hope for anything on earth but labour and sorrow, will not joyfully heare the tidings of salvation, and presently labour to make sure of a better habitation, how great is your sin and folly. The poore received the glad tidings of the Gospell in Christ's time on earth, when the rich rejected it. They dreame that they have something surer and better for them than heaven, and choose it to their

damnation. But you know that you must have heaven or nothing : for this world is to you but a raging ocean or a bed of thornes.

(3) You little know how great a mercey it is that you have not the constant strong temptations to fleshly pleasures, gluttony and drunkennes and fornication and fleshly lust and brutish sensuality, as those have that live with the continual baites of those sins before them, that are every day at a full table of flesh and wines. The stronger the temptation, the greater difficulty to overcome it. And God saith, *If you live after the flesh yee shall die, But if by the Spirit you mortifie the deeds of the body yee shall live.* The question is whether you would have the Devil's baites to be more deceitfull, and your salvation made farre more difficult and doubtfull.

(4) And truly it is a great mercey to you that your *calling* and daily labour is so necessary and good that you may call it an acceptable service to God, and expect that he owne and blesse you in it, if you do it with an obedient heavenly mind : whereas the daily life of the voluptuous Rich men in feasting and gaming and play and idlenes is a constant Sin abhorred of God.

III. Thankfully value and moderately use the cheap and course dyet that your condition alloweth you. I have told you before that your dyet is farre more healthfull than Dives's was : and I believe more pleasant to a healthfull appetite. Few of you lye under their gowt and stone and dropsies etc. Your whey and butter-milk possets, is much more healthfull than their sack and claret. And your whey-curds and milke and cabbage and turnips and parsnips and flummery and such like than their venison and costly fowls and fish. A quarter of an acre set with potatoes, and those called Jerusalem Artichokes especially, will find you half a year's wholesom food. When you must have flesh a sheep's head of sixpence or a biefes cheeke will give you better broth and stronger nourishment than most of their costly preparations : Or Sheepes feet are a wholesome meat. If you are sick you have cheap medicine in your fields and gardens, if you knew them. If you are weak, eggs and cawdles¹ and well-made pancakes and puddings are more nutritive than quailles and larks and all the curiosities of the voluptuous. If you are consumptive you

¹ Cawdles—variant of caudle (calidum) = a warm drink consisting of thin gruel, mixed with wine or ale, sweetened and spiced, given chiefly to "sick people"—*O.D.*

have snailles. If you have dangerous coughs you have Elicampane and Treacle (molossus) or honey, or, if need be, flower of brimstone. If you have old coughs, you may have Olibanum, or fryed beans boiled with garlike, and eaten for food, that doth wonders. But I am not playing the physician for you yet : but intreat you to be thankfull to God for your condition, and not to think it worse than it is.

IV. Whatever shift you make, be sure you teach your children to read ; and get a Bible and some few good books in your house ; and if anyone can read let the rest heare him. If you have not money, beg it of some rich rather than neglect your owne and your children's souls. I have written about 128 books, but I would commend to the poore but a few :—

First, a twopenny book called *How to be certainly Saved*.

(2) *The Call to the Unconverted*.

(3) *Directions for Sound Conversion*.

(4) But if you can get but one : *The Poore man's family book*, which I wrote for them that cannot get many, as conteining all your soule's concernes from the hour of conversion to the hour of death.

V. Be sure to improve the Lords Day. You are then vacant from your labours : be so from your cares. And in long winter nights when men cannot work, you have time to read and pray and catechize your children.

VI. Be not Strangers to your Teachers. Aske them what you doubt of. Desire their necessary helpe and advice about the care of your soules.

VII. Keep peace and love in your families and with your neighbours. Take heed of scandalous living and of divisions, strife and unrighteousness.

VIII. Never borrow money of any man, when you have not sufficient reason to be confident of paying him. If your state be doubtfull, let your creditor know it, and consent to run the hazard, else you rob him while you take his money without his true consent. They are as bad as Highway robbers, that live by borrowing on other men's money, by hideing deceit. It's farre better in your necessity to beg. And debt is a heavy burden.

IX. Adde not to your poverty by indiscretion, idlenes, or gaming or excess.

X. Flatter not yourselves with the thoughts of long life, but spend every day in preparation for death ; and in all your business remember whither you are going and where you must dwell for ever. Take not Christ's Redemption and the promises of Heaven for doubtfull things. May¹ the firme beliefe of Heavenly Glory possess your soules, how comfortably may you suffer and live and dye.

¹ I.e., If but the firm belief of . . .

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